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# Theological Education

Faculty Development,  
Evaluation, and Advancement

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**THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**  
**Volume XXXI, Number 2**  
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Executive Editor  
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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	i
<i>James L. Waits</i>	
<b>Issues for Future Faculty Planning</b>	1
<i>Joseph C. Hough, Jr.</i>	
<b>Choosing and Nurturing Faculty for an Unconventional Seminary</b>	13
<i>Barbara Brown Zikmund and William McKinney</i>	
<b>Faculty Development: An Organic Perspective</b>	27
<i>Samuel T. Logan, Jr.</i>	
<b>Evaluating an Uncertain Craft: Faculty Assessment and Theological Education</b>	37
<i>Mary C. Boys, S.N.J.M.</i>	
<b>Standards for Innovation: The Case for Theological Librarians</b>	51
<i>Stephen D. Crocco and Sara J. Myers</i>	
<b>Riding the Whirlwind: The Community of Scholars as a Response to the Changing Face of Theological Education</b>	63
<i>David D. Thayer, S.S.</i>	



# Introduction

*James L. Waits*

In this issue, a group of theological educators presents a variety of observations on the development, evaluation, and advancement of theological faculties. Five of them are administrators of theological schools; all are themselves faculty members. They bring a range of perspectives and approaches to the theme of this issue, and they share their reflections and experiences of faculty development.

Joseph C. Hough, Jr. calls attention to several critical issues for future faculty planning in an era of no mandatory retirement age in the U.S. and the impact that may have on employment opportunities for new candidates for faculty positions. He also examines the challenges of recruiting high quality and highly motivated theological faculty members. He proposes a number of suggestions for future faculty development that merit careful and sustained attention.

Hartford Seminary, with its mission that is unique among ATS member schools, has developed some new understandings of faculty and a totally new approach to faculty recruitment, retention, and advancement. While an "unconventional" seminary in many respects, Hartford's model of faculty development, as presented by Barbara Brown Zikmund and William McKinney, offers some thought-provoking new concepts for consideration.

Development of a theological faculty as a team of "Kingdom-oriented" theological educators is presented by Samuel T. Logan, Jr. He describes the essential components of the corporate development of the faculty by addressing issues of institutional unity and justice.

Mary C. Boys acknowledges the difficulties and sensitivities of evaluating the "uncertain craft" of teaching but stresses the importance of evaluation for the improvement of teaching, for fostering collegial relationships, and for insuring that promotion is judiciously implemented. She then offers a working model for peer assessment and a short bibliography to aid in the process.

The faculty status and consequent policies for promotion, evaluation, and tenure for the theological school librarian are examined by Stephen Crocco and Sara Myers. They report on the findings of a survey they conducted of 32 librarians in ATS member schools and call for clearly defined standards for theological education with respect to the position of the librarian.

The development of the faculty as a community of scholars is addressed by David Thayer. He examines the changing nature of scholarship and the demands it places on the institution and the individual scholar, and then offers some suggestions for developing an integrated community of scholars committed to the goals and needs of the institution.

Together, the authors offer some innovative ways of thinking about faculty development and some models for use and adaptation.



# Issues for Future Faculty Planning

*Joseph C. Hough, Jr.*

*The Divinity School, Vanderbilt University*

In March of 1991, the Council on Theological Scholarship and Research of The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the ATS Issues Research Committee jointly sponsored a convocation of more than 100 academic deans to discuss the issues of developing and nurturing future faculties in theological education. Working with the general theme of "Building Theological Faculties of the Future," participants in the convocation raised a broad range of complex issues. These issues should be considered by anyone who has a vital interest in the quality and effectiveness of faculty who will teach future religious leaders and provide the research that will assist religious communities more effectively to understand their faith and practice.

The papers presented at the convocation were published in the autumn 1991 issue of *Theological Education*. The papers addressed a wide range of topics such as:

- the criteria for determining excellence in theological faculties
- faculty responsibility as mentors and role models
- the "theological" nature of theological education
- the necessity for diversity in the selection of faculty members
- emerging issues in research

While no consensus was reached (or even attempted, for that matter), the issues were joined. A careful reading of all of the papers is essential for understanding the questions that we need to keep before us as we continue our work of faculty development and nurture.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, in the autumn 1987 issue of *Theological Education*, I offered some of my reflections on the ways in which academic deans could effectively promote faculty research. In that same issue, Ronald Thiemann's article on the scholarly vocation addressed the matter of maintaining excellence in theological research. Together, these papers highlight the importance of research by theological faculty and indicate ways in which we can conceive and nurture excellence in research in institutions dedicated to theological education.

Because both the autumn 1987 and autumn 1991 issues of *Theological Education* are readily available to readers of this journal, I see no reason to rehearse the

materials that have already been published and discussed by a large number of academic leaders. What I shall do in this short article is to focus on the various aspects of two major issues of faculty development that were not discussed at the 1991 convocation: Faculty development in a post-mandatory-retirement era and faculty development as the search for high quality recruits. At the outset, I shall try to clarify the issues as I see them and suggest some courses of action for theological schools that might help us to plan effectively for building and sustaining strong faculties.

### **Faculty Development Issues in a Post-Mandatory-Retirement Era**

Theological schools, to an even greater degree than other sectors of higher education, are confronted with the prospect of significant numbers of aging faculty who could retire in large numbers during the next eight to 10 years. For example, the study of theological faculty done by the Center for the Study of Theological Education at Auburn Theological Seminary notes that in 1970 only 35 percent of all faculty in North American theological schools were older than 50. In 1993, that figure had increased to 51 percent (U.S. schools only).<sup>2</sup> That alone should attract the attention of administrators and faculty members who are interested in preserving and enhancing the quality of theological education for the future. However, there is a complicating factor of unknown magnitude for theological schools in the United States. In 1986, the Congress of the United States amended the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) to remove all provisions for mandatory retirement age. The ADEA was first passed in 1967. At that time its provisions protected all persons ages 40-65 against age discrimination. Then, in 1978, Congress extended the protections against age discrimination to age 70. That legislation became effective in 1982. Now as a result of the 1986 amendment, after January 1, 1994, all persons currently holding teaching positions may teach as long as they wish so long as they are not subject to dismissal for cause under due process procedures applying to faculty members of any age. In light of this legislation, theological schools are facing an unprecedented situation with regard to faculty development.

To some, it seems now that the dire predictions that accompanied the congressional action in 1986 perhaps were overdrawn. For example, the American Council on Education predicted that the new law would create faculties of minimally active and highly compensated older persons who would strain institutional resources and block the appointment and advancement of racial/

ethnic persons and women. This in turn, they argued, would seriously erode the academic quality of institutions of higher learning. After several years and dozens of studies, including a major one published by the National Research Council in 1991, the issues are much clearer and the assessments of the future consequences of ending mandatory retirement in colleges and universities are much more measured. What is the likely impact of “uncapping” the mandatory retirement age?

It now seems that uncapping mandatory retirement age will have very little *immediate* effect on the average retirement age of faculties in most theological schools, but it may have significant *long-range* effects. This conclusion is based on the fact that most faculty members in their late 60s have already made plans to retire. Even more important are the data from the most recent national studies of the effects of “uncapping” which indicate that fewer than two percent of current faculty in higher education will actually choose to teach beyond the age of 70. In fact overall, the average retirement age for faculty in all institutions of higher learning in the United States seems not likely to rise beyond 68. A note of caution is in order here. Faculty members in *private* institutions tend to retire an average of two years later than those in public institutions, and faculty members in the humanities and related fields tend to retire later than those in the natural and social sciences.

In addition, the single most important factor influencing the choice to retire is *not* age but perceived prospects for income and financial security. Because theological faculties are among the lowest paid faculty in higher education, the financial prospects for retirement may prove to be far more troubling for members of theological faculties than for others. These factors, taken together, constitute a significant and likely pressure on theological faculties to delay their retirement age more than the average faculty member in higher education.

It is likely that, in the long run, theological faculty will tend to retire as much as two or three years later than the average faculty member in higher education. Assuming that this will, indeed, be the case, what are the implications for developing and nurturing faculties for theological schools in the future?

Will the quality of theological education suffer because of the aging of faculties? Probably not. A number of studies of faculty persons up to 65 years of age provided no evidence for the claim by the American Association of University Professors that age as such is correlated with effectiveness in teaching and productivity in research. In fact, there are some studies that have shown that older faculty are actually better teachers and more productive in research than their younger colleagues.

Most commentators on higher education agree that high-quality teaching and research in an institution are more likely to be the result of effective evaluation procedures than any other factor. Though there are wide variations in stated expectations and rigor of application, most institutions have search procedures designed to emphasize quality in recruiting new faculty and procedures for evaluating resident faculty for promotion and tenure. Tenure, of course, has primarily to do with academic freedom. It is a protection against dismissal without cause, not a license for incompetence, and it was previously limited to a specified time by mandatory retirement provisions. Therefore, colleges and universities could easily ignore their problems with incompetent tenured faculty for long periods of time because those problems would eventually be resolved by mandatory retirement. Partly as a result of this informal understanding and partly due to faculty reluctance to judge their peers' competence, few institutions of higher learning have developed adequate procedures for faculty evaluation after tenure. As a result, moves for dismissal, even for obvious cases of incompetence or misbehavior, are very cumbersome, and they can involve lengthy legal challenges. They are also very rare; only 31 cases involving faculty dismissals were heard in U.S. courts between 1960 and 1985.

Because most faculty members in higher education achieve the top rank and tenure by the time they are 40 years of age, lack of attention to continuing rigorous review always has been a serious problem. Under new legal provisions, the problem is exacerbated in two ways: We no longer have mandatory retirement to relieve us of the responsibility for evaluation after tenure, and the dismissal of older faculty members now makes institutions of higher learning without regular and continuing faculty post-tenure review particularly vulnerable to charges of age discrimination.

In general, theological schools are no better on these matters than higher education as a whole. In fact, theological schools are, in many if not most instances, worse. Unfortunately, length of service is often the main criterion for promotion and tenure in theological schools, and in many institutions, there is very little, if any, pressure for research and publication. Moreover, as in other institutions of higher education, the evaluation of teaching performance is often perfunctory, if it is done at all.

Without serious attention to the development of rigorous evaluation procedures for tenure and promotion, the maintenance of excellence in a faculty has been nearly impossible. Uncapping gives these matters a new and higher level of urgency. Within a few years, the overwhelming majority of faculty members could be at the rank of professor and holding tenure. This would mean that for most of

the faculty of theological education, there would be no regular occasions for review by peers and administrators to assist faculty members in the development of their research and teaching.

Second, even if the appropriate procedures of evaluation were developed to ensure that quality of teaching and productivity will remain high in older faculties, there is no doubt that an aging faculty has a significant impact on the fiscal resources needed to sustain an institution. Senior faculty members at the age of 65 and beyond are usually at the top of the pay scale. Their annual salary and benefit increases in dollar amounts, therefore, tend to be significantly greater than those of younger faculty. For example, one study of major universities demonstrated that an increase of one year in the average retirement age would add at least three percent annually to a major university budget. Though the findings of this study might not be applicable to smaller educational units such as theological schools, no administrator in a theological school needs a study to show her or him that a faculty, 50 percent of whom are 60 years old or older, will be significantly more costly than a faculty with a greater percentage of members in the 28- to 50-year age range. In times of shrinking financial resources in theological education, therefore, an aging faculty could have significant effects on the schools' efforts to retain sufficient numbers of faculty and to provide more adequate faculty salaries. It could also severely limit the financial resources available for the development of new educational programs at the schools.

Third, the most obvious impact of aging theological faculties on future resources could be a sharp decrease in the number of teaching positions available to those students who choose the vocation of teaching in theological education.<sup>3</sup> In a major report on theological faculties, The Center for the Study of Theological Education has calculated that through retirements and attrition approximately 1,800 faculty vacancies in ATS schools will be created between 1992 and 2002.<sup>4</sup> The writers of the report caution readers, however, that one cannot assume that all faculty vacancies will be filled.

Theological education, like higher education in general, will be subject to very severe financial pressures in the next decade. This will be especially true of schools supported by the "old line" denominations whose memberships are declining and whose financial resources are dwindling at every level of church life. Furthermore, I have already shown why projections of the average rates of retirement among theological faculty are very risky because faculty members will, in the long run, tend to retire later than the average faculty age of retirement in higher education for a variety of reasons. Moreover, declines in enrollment in

theological schools could decrease the number of faculty positions that will open as a result of projected patterns of attrition and retirement.

To avoid the problems attending the loading of faculty in the top salary ranges, theological schools need to plan to deal now with the major disincentives for retirement. Inadequate salaries and pension benefits are the major disincentives followed closely by concerns for health insurance coverage and coverage for long-term custodial care.

These are some of the issues in faculty development that will face theological educators in the next decade as a result of the lifting of mandatory retirement requirements.

### **Recruiting High Quality and Highly Motivated Theological Faculty Members**

It is obvious that any major advancement of the average retirement age of theological school faculties will result in diminishing employment opportunities for new candidates for faculty positions. The resulting closure of opportunities for teaching, together with anticipated financial constraints, could have a chilling effect on recruitment of persons for teaching positions and could further limit openings for women and racial/ethnic persons in theological faculties. Without opportunities to add new faculty members, institutions could be bound to curricular patterns that should be changed to meet new needs and new challenges, thus limiting the kind of institutional innovation that makes theological education exciting and attractive to potential younger colleagues, especially those with exceptional promise and achievement.

But what about the supply of highly qualified candidates for the positions that do open? Even if we assume, somewhat optimistically, that 1,000 to 1,200 new faculty persons will be needed in theological education by the year 2002, will there be a sufficient number of candidates of high quality to fill those positions? In addition, will there be a sufficient number of women and racial/ethnic candidates for positions in theological schools to help the schools address the problems created by the continuing huge preponderance of white male faculty members?

At first glance, there is every indication that there will be a sufficient gross number of interested candidates to fill positions. At the end of the academic year 1988-89, 1,165 persons were awarded doctoral degrees in religion and theology. In 1993-94, enrollment in Ph.D., S.T.D., and Th.D. programs in ATS schools alone was 3,510. For the next few years, therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that the

number of teaching degrees appropriate for theological education awarded annually will be more than 1,000. However, gross numbers of newly graduated candidates tell us very little about three of the most important issues in future faculty development.

1. What about the quality of those who are entering doctoral programs and who aim to teach in theological schools? Any definitive answer to this question must await the results of a complete study of doctoral students in various graduate programs in theology and religion, but there is some evidence already that there is reason for concern. Several studies indicate that, as a whole, the quality of candidates entering programs that lead to teaching in higher education is declining and that business schools, medical schools, and law schools are gaining more and more applicants from undergraduates in the top echelon of their classes. For example, there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of Phi Beta Kappa students and Rhodes Scholars who are choosing teaching as a vocation, and the same is true of graduating seniors in general. All of these trends cut across race and gender, and the humanities have been among the areas hardest hit by this decline. It seems reasonable to assume that these trends affecting the humanities will also tend to have a similar impact on religious studies and theological education (often included in the humanities by researchers). If so, there is good reason to believe that theological educators should be concerned about the academic capabilities of future prospects for teaching positions in theological schools.

2. Recent changes in the foci and locations of doctoral education may also affect the pool of candidates who are interested in and capable of teaching in a theological school. For one thing, a growing number of doctoral students in religion are being educated in programs that do not presuppose a degree from a seminary or a divinity school and whose academic programs do not follow the old pattern of Christian studies that dominated doctoral work in university divinity schools up through the 1950s. In some fields, graduate work may not even be done in a religious studies context at all. For example, many departments of history are giving wide latitude for the study of religious history. Because of this, students who become candidates for teaching positions in theological schools may now receive the Ph.D. without having ever been exposed to critical theological thinking. The issue here is whether there is something specifically "theological" about theological education that makes teaching in a theological school significantly different from teaching in a university or college department of religion. This concern lay behind much of the discussion at the 1991 convocation of academic deans, and it is very much present in the recent books by Edward Farley and David Kelsey.

Both Farley and Kelsey strongly imply that the very nature of theological education requires of its teachers, regardless of their academic discipline, a passionate commitment to the knowledge of God and an abiding interest in those communities where the knowledge of God is the focus of practice.<sup>5</sup> If this is true, graduate education that has no theological dimension is not the best preparation for teaching in a theological school. Theological educators need to continue serious discussions about what our expectations are for persons who are to teach in a theological school and about what is implied in our search for these theologically grounded faculty members. And where is this theological dimension to be acquired by prospective theological faculty? Can we expect that this kind of theological formation be a part of graduate study, or does the responsibility for it lie with the receiving faculty and administration?

3. The single most critical issue for the development of future theological faculties is the recruitment of able racial/ethnic candidates for available faculty positions. We have made very little progress in this important area of faculty development during the last two and a half decades. In 1970, both Protestant and Catholic schools had faculties that were more than 96 percent white. By 1993, the percentage of whites had declined by only six percent to approximately 90 percent. If one subtracts the minority faculty who teach at predominantly African-American schools, even this small gain disappears. The fact is that the average number of minority faculty in all ATS schools is less than *one*, and almost half of the Protestant schools have no minority faculty at all!<sup>6</sup>

Given the emphasis in ATS standards of accreditation and the intentionality of schools that will be hiring, it is unclear whether there will be a sufficient number of minority persons to meet the priority on minority hiring. In 1993, there were 138 African Americans, only 54 Hispanic Americans, and 215 Asian Americans enrolled in all ATS research doctoral programs.

Though the gains in the number of women on theological faculties have been significantly greater (from less than three percent in 1970 to about 17 percent in 1993), the recruitment of women remains a major issue.<sup>7</sup> In contrast to the situation with racial/ethnic persons, however, it is likely that there will be no shortage of women candidates for teaching positions. Though there were nearly four times as many men as women in ATS doctoral programs in 1993, there were 1007 women enrolled.<sup>8</sup> Still, if theological schools are to achieve the kind of diversity that will reflect the commitments they and their supporting constituencies have made, and if theological schools wish to take seriously the call for theological pluralism, then serious attention must be given to recruiting promising women and racial/ethnic



students early in their academic careers, and assistance in finding the necessary financial resources must be provided to see them through increasingly expensive graduate programs.

## **Suggestions for Future Faculty Development**

Before I turn to specific suggestions, I shall risk recommending that every chief administrator in a theological school familiarize herself or himself with the report by the National Research Council entitled *Ending Mandatory Retirement for Tenured Faculty: The Consequences for Higher Education*.<sup>9</sup> It is a concise summary of most of the research on future faculty plans for retirement. It also includes a number of significant policy recommendations.

My more specific suggestions are the following:

1. We need to give serious attention now to the development of post-tenure review procedures that will be both supportive and helpful to faculty members. In the past there has been considerable faculty opposition to post-tenure review. The opposition is due in part to the general reluctance of faculty to make formal judgments about the performance of colleagues. It also may reflect the fear that such a review process would be used punitively by unsympathetic administrators, or that it would be perfunctory at best and, hence, a waste of time. If, however, post-tenure review could be construed as a joint responsibility of the dean and the faculty for the continuing support of senior faculty as they seek to improve their teaching and advance their research, the reluctance might be overcome. Regular post-tenure review could become the most significant instrument for the continuing improvement of individual faculty research and teaching, particularly in the time when schools will have an aging faculty, most of whom are at the top rank and tenured.

2. Administrators and faculty members in the schools should begin discussions of retirement incentive programs such as lump-sum payouts to those who wish to retire after age 55. According to the National Research Council, offers of bonuses for declaring the date of retirement in advance have been particularly successful and have been important aids to long-range planning for faculty and programs. Potentially less costly and more applicable to smaller schools are partial retirement plans and phased retirement plans to help schools adjust to the sudden transition from a relatively older faculty to much younger and less experienced faculty members. These plans also can help to alleviate the major retirement disincentive for older faculty members, namely, the problem of financial security. Generally, partial retirement plans assume that an individual will either

draw on social security, pension funds, or another job for the major source of income, and at the same time, will maintain partial employment at the school for a limited and clearly specified period of time. Phased retirement plans assume that the faculty member will continue to count on salary from the school as a source of income, but will accept a significant cut in salary in exchange for reduced load for a limited and clearly specified period of time. In both cases, it is possible to anticipate continued, if limited, service from experienced faculty and also to allow openings for new appointments without significant budget increases.

3. Insofar as it is possible, schools should be encouraged to improve faculty salaries and to provide pension plans that will yield a reasonable percentage of actual current income at retirement for all tenure-track faculty members. While it may not be possible for theological schools to meet the National Research Council's recommendation that pension income should, at a minimum, be 67 percent of current salary at the time of retirement, some improvements certainly would help to allay the financial insecurity that is the primary disincentive to retirement at any age.

4. ATS should undertake a study to determine the feasibility of and need for a cooperative effort on the part of theological schools to negotiate acceptable options for long-term custodial insurance and supplemental health insurance plans to cover expenses not covered by Medicare or other government-financed programs. It may well be that in many instances a combination of denominational programs and individual school initiatives have already anticipated the long-term health care needs of retiring faculty and their families and that adequate provisions have been made. In any case, it is especially important that the schools remain alert to this major faculty concern in a time of anticipated major changes in the national provisions for health care, particularly for the elderly.

5. Because we know so little about students in doctoral programs, ATS should give support and close attention to the results of the study of all graduate students being done by the Center for the Study of Theological Education. The focus should be on the quality and vocational preferences of students in graduate programs in religion in all of the schools that have been major suppliers of faculty for theological schools. This would at least give us some more realistic idea of the quality and size of the pool of faculty candidates from which we are likely to recruit.

6. In light of the alarming statistics on the declining numbers of high academic achievers who are entering the teaching profession, especially in the humanities, ATS should authorize an ad hoc group to prepare recommendations

to the schools for an active and sustained corporate recruiting plan to induce high academic achievers in colleges and seminaries. The plan should focus especially on efforts that might prompt racial/ethnic persons and women to consider teaching in a theological school.

7. We need to know a great deal more about the way in which a collegial learning community is formed. Some schools have done excellent pioneering work in this area, especially with younger faculty. It would be helpful if ATS would solicit from the member schools reports on efforts they have undertaken to cultivate collegiality among faculty members and to encourage them in their research. The data from the study of young faculty by the Center for the Study of Theological Education should be widely disseminated, and ATS should undertake to devise procedures whereby information from both sources can be discussed among representatives of the member schools.

8. Finally, I am convinced that it is time for schools that have major doctoral programs in religion to begin a cooperative review of the form and content of doctoral programs. At the top of any agenda for discussion should be questions about the function of the dissertation. Most dissertations do not make an original contribution to knowledge except in the narrowest sense. Few of them are published, and those that are are often so specialized that they have little impact outside a narrow circle of readers who share the interests of the mentor of the dissertation writer. It may well be that several shorter papers directed to specific audiences would give us better insight into the potential of the writers for contributing to knowledge in the university as well as to other important public and ecclesial constituencies. We need also to ask whether the patterns of study in graduate programs, most of which have remained the same for half a century, are still the best patterns for educating teachers for theological schools or, for that matter, college departments. We have seen internal alterations in patterns of disciplinary study, and many schools are reporting an upsurge of interest in interdisciplinary studies. Yet our formal organization does not reflect these changes. Moreover, in light of the wide consensus that we need more emphasis on teaching in higher education, we need seriously to ask if programs in religion can continue to educate solely for research with little opportunity given for training or even for discussion of the art of teaching. These and other questions deserve sustained attention by those who are teaching future faculty and those who will employ them in the future.

*Joseph C. Hough, Jr. is dean of The Divinity School of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and professor of Christian ethics.*

ENDNOTES

1. The most helpful books on faculty development that I know are Jack H. Schuster, Daniel W. Wheeler, et. al., *Enhancing Faculty Careers* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990) and Robert Boice, *The New Faculty Member* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).
2. "Theological Faculty: A Current Profile and Estimate of Future Needs," A Report of the Center for the Study of Theological Education, Auburn Seminary, June 1992, and the ATS Data Center.
3. The optimism created by the predictions of Bowen and Schuster (*American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1986]), who predicted huge increases in the demand for new faculty in higher education during the 1990s and beyond, have been shattered by the incredible decline in financial support for higher education, especially the sharp cuts in funding for state universities that have occurred during the period from 1990-1993.
4. Cited above.
5. Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What's Theological About a Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992). For a short summary of the issue here, see my article, "Who Shall Teach in a Theological School?" in *Theological Education* XXVIII (Autumn 1991).
6. These figures are from the preliminary returns on a recently completed survey of all ATS faculty by the Center for the Study of Theological Education at Auburn Seminary. Final figures may vary slightly when all returns are processed.
7. In 1970, only 3.1 percent of all theological faculty were women. In 1993, women constituted 17 percent.
8. See *Fact Book on Theological Education* (Pittsburgh: The Association of Theological Schools, 1993).
9. Available from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20418.

# Choosing and Nurturing Faculty for an Unconventional Seminary

*Barbara Brown Zikmund*  
*William McKinney*  
*Hartford Seminary*

Hartford Seminary was founded in 1834 by Calvinist Congregational clergy who wanted to provide an alternative to the more conventional theological education at Yale. Over the years it evolved into a complex institution preparing local pastors, training professional Christian educators, and equipping missionaries for service overseas. Known as the Hartford Seminary Foundation, by the late 1960s it offered a full spectrum of programs preparing clergy for ordination, missionaries for international service, educators for specialized ministries, and doctoral students for various advanced degrees. Its faculty was effective and respected in professional and academic circles.

In 1972, the trustees of the institution made a radical decision that reshaped the institution into a new kind of resource for churches and their ministries. Phasing out its residential campus programs and abolishing degrees required by the churches or the academic world, the Seminary recast its mission—offering services and resources for contemporary Christian living and deploying resources into the field.

As a result the focus of Hartford Seminary shifted to contemporary social and religious trends. Campus buildings and library holdings from the 18th and 19th centuries were sold to other institutions. The Seminary ceased offering degrees, voluntarily relinquishing accreditation and scaling down to live within endowment income.

The change was not easy. Faculty members with specialties in Islamic studies were deployed to a university where their expertise could enrich an already well-known program. Other faculty were let go; still others were brought in. Those faculty who lost their positions felt betrayed. New faculty, hired to launch new programs, were enthusiastic. For a short period in the 1970s Hartford Seminary did not even have a “faculty,” everyone was “staff.” The Seminary abolished traditional academic ranks and tenure. Furthermore, the implementation of the new vision was uneven, leading to high staff turnover and mixed messages from seminary leadership. As the years passed, however, Hartford Seminary shaped a new identity, and with it some important new understandings of faculty.

In the 1990s the Seminary reestablished some traditional educational norms, while continuing to explore new models for faculty appointments and accountability. Faculty do not have academic rank or tenure, yet they exercise a central role in institutional governance. Academic freedom is affirmed in policy and practice, and there is a presumption that faculty contracts will be renewed after an initial period of service has been completed and favorably evaluated by peers. For salary purposes faculty are assigned to one of three broad classifications. All “core” faculty are appointed by the board; adjunct, visiting, and associate instructors and researchers are selected by administrators within centers and programs in consultation with the faculty.

Hartford Seminary now offers two degrees designed to strengthen the existing ministries of ordained and lay leaders: (1) a Doctor of Ministry degree with an emphasis on congregational studies and (2) a Master of Arts degree with two options (one exploring the ministry of daily life/religious leadership and one engaging in the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations). It does not offer the basic degree leading to ordination (Master of Divinity). In addition the Seminary sponsors certificate programs for Black and Hispanic church leaders and numerous educational outreach events. It also sustains a nationally recognized Center for Social and Religious Research and, building upon its historic strength in mission education, it supports the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. The Seminary’s most recent purpose statement, adopted in 1991, states that “Hartford Seminary is an educational institution seeking to serve God by supporting faithful living in a multifaith and pluralistic world.”

### **Faculty Selection**

In order to carry out this calling, the faculty and board of trustees recognize that it is essential to recruit and support faculty who are enthusiastic and skilled in:

1. Teaching in an unusual array of degree, certificate, and educational outreach programs. Faculty engage in advising, coaching, and mentoring students who enroll in programs, as well as supporting local, national, and international religious leadership.
2. Research and publication, with special commitment to the practice of religious communities and their leaders.
3. Being effective “Hartford Seminary citizens” and colleagues. As a small institution, Hartford Seminary expects all faculty members to share responsibility for the quality of seminary communal life and administration.

4. Public involvement and service to the professions through academic, ecclesiastical, ecumenical, and community organizations.

Program growth, retirements, and professional changes have put Hartford Seminary into an intensive search mode during the past two years. At least five of its core faculty (more than a third) will be new in the 1995-1996 academic year. This year, in particular, has turned into one mass search committee meeting.

In the fall of 1994 we faced the challenge of filling three and possibly four positions at the same time. Three were in identified disciplinary areas: Bible, theology/ethics, and Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations. These were created because of a retirement, a resignation, and a partial phased-in retirement option being exercised by an existing faculty member. An additional staff resignation created a vacancy in the position of Director of Degree Programs, which the faculty requested be filled as a core faculty position. It was also clear that the above appointments needed to provide administrative leadership for the Black and Hispanic Ministries programs. Beyond this, our affirmative action commitment is deep and long-standing, and we have a long-term goal to have a core faculty that is half women, half men, and at least 25 percent from ethnic and minority communities.

In determining all new faculty appointments, the president, after consultation with the faculty, makes a recommendation to the Academic Programs Committee (APC) of the board that a specific position be created. This APC committee is made up of five trustees (one of whom must be a pastor). Three corporators (the legal body that elects the trustees of the Seminary), two faculty members, and two students also serve on the APC with voice and no vote. The dean of the Seminary serves as staff for the committee.

After a new position has been created, the APC appoints a search committee for each position. Every search committee is made up of three core faculty members, three trustees, and the president (ex officio). Others may be asked to serve with voice and no vote. We are convinced that having an equal number of trustees and faculty on search committees is very good for the school. Not only do faculty have to make their concerns understandable to trustees, but trustees gain a much deeper knowledge of the Seminary after serving on a search committee.

In September 1994 three search committees were created. In this situation we faced a major issue: How to provide each search committee with appropriate autonomy while simultaneously meeting projected administrative needs and diversity goals? At the same time we were concerned about not overwhelming existing faculty who needed to carry on the work of the school.

Our solution was to hold what turned out to be a “candidates conference.” Instead of having a series of interviews on campus for each candidate, we brought nine faculty candidates to our campus for interviews in an intensive three-day period during the third week in December. This proved to be a good time for the interviews because there were no classes and most candidates were also available.

Each candidate had four intensive sessions: (1) two hours with the appropriate search committee, (2) an hour with faculty (and staff) not on the search committee, (3) an hour with students, and (4) an hour with the president and the dean together. A complicated schedule was prepared for everyone, weaving candidates in and out of various groups. Each candidate was hosted by a staff member or student, who arranged transportation and helped each candidate see something of the region if they were unfamiliar with Hartford.

It was an exhausting schedule, but it was also an exhilarating experience. At the end of each day faculty, staff, students, and trustees gathered for debriefing “town meetings” to give feedback to the search committees. Each search committee had screened candidates carefully and the options presented to the community were impressive. Every candidate had important contributions to make. As the discussion evolved over the three days, everyone began to think about the various patterns of appointments that were possible. Combinations between teaching/research fields and possible administrative assignments began to emerge. Although each search committee had its own assignment, the work was not done in a vacuum. Efforts were made by the whole community to discern what was the best pattern of appointments for the entire Seminary.

Over the holiday break, the president and the dean were in regular contact by phone and e-mail, and we continued to have additional conversations with search committee members. In those conversations a consensus emerged that we ought to go for four appointments, rather than three, thereby meeting some of our administrative and affirmative action goals. By early January we shared concrete proposals with faculty colleagues and search committees, who responded with genuine enthusiasm. At the end of January, after more leisurely visits to Hartford for several of the candidates, we had acceptances from three of our four choices.

What have we learned?

First, it is difficult but possible to pursue diverse goals in building a faculty. In these faculty searches Hartford Seminary has taken the initiative to encourage strong candidates to apply. We have used personal contacts and connections extensively to find and interest quality people. Search committees *searched*, rather than simply processed applications.



Second, building a strong faculty takes the involvement of the entire Seminary community. Administrators are important; the president and the dean play an active role in faculty recruitment, sometimes talking with prospective candidates a half-dozen times or more. Obviously administrators have a special interest when they are trying to combine administrative responsibilities with teaching and research strengths. We know, however, that few faculty give up secure positions to work with *presidents* and *deans*; they are impressed when they find that trustees, faculty, administrative staff, and students are every bit as excited and committed as the administrators.

Third, the pursuit of faculty excellence and faculty diversity are complimentary. Our final pool of 11 candidates included three Hispanic men, two African-American women, one African-American man, three Anglo women (one of whom is Muslim) and two Anglo men. By bringing most of these people to campus in a compressed/intensive time block, we were able to give all candidates parallel exposure to us and equal treatment. It was a fair process, and because of the close proximity of the interviews, people became very creative in their thinking about staffing patterns and options.

Fourth, this search process not only produced high-quality faculty appointments, the process was good for the ongoing life of the institution. As a result existing faculty, staff, students, and trustees know more about Hartford Seminary and more about each other. We are a healthier and better place. As we worked together to discern the best appointments for our common future, we learned some things. We saw ourselves as others see us, and we liked what we discovered. As a consequence, there is tremendous ownership and excitement about the future even before our new colleagues arrive.

Fifth, because Hartford Seminary does not offer tenure to any of its new appointees, some additional observations can be made. Obviously we have no difficulty attracting new Ph.D. graduates who do not have tenure and who are not worrying about tenure. Finding a job is their priority. We also have little difficulty attracting people at the other end of their careers where one five-year contract will put them very close to retirement. They are able to risk when they have little to lose. Some people, who are in the middle, are willing to give up tenure and join us mid-career because they believe in what we are doing and they want to be part of the venture. They are not worried about job security as much as they are worried about the limitations they find in other settings. They are seeking intellectual freedom to do the kind of research and teaching that interests them, and they are excited about our unconventional identity.

## Faculty Contract Reviews

Once core faculty are appointed at Hartford Seminary, how do we keep their enthusiasm? What are the patterns of accountability? What is the process for review and renewal of contracts?

Core faculty appointed with little or no teaching/research track records are given an initial three-year contract. At the end of the first year a brief review is made, based upon a self-assessment, feedback from colleagues, and administrative judgment. This annual review is repeated at the end of the second year. If the review is positive, a recommendation is made each year to extend the initial three-year contract for a period of one additional year. If both of these reviews are positive, in essence the first contract becomes a five-year contract.

Core faculty appointed after many years of teaching/research in other settings may receive initial five-year contracts.

Once appointed, all core faculty are regularly reviewed at five-year intervals, regardless of their length of service at the Seminary. These reviews have two purposes: First, to nurture, support, and develop the faculty member being reviewed as an effective teacher, researcher, and colleague; and second, to assess the quality of the individual faculty member's performance. Reviews are conducted by a Faculty Review Committee (two members of the faculty elected by secret ballot each year).

Criteria for evaluating core faculty at Hartford Seminary involve four areas as listed in the Seminary Handbook:

1. *Teaching and Educational Outreach.* The Seminary teaching staff is expected to relate its teaching in degree programs and educational outreach to the needs and functions of the church and other religious institutions and to the experience and practice of religious leaders. It should do so in such a way as to include critical thinking. Hence, relevance to institutional and individual experience and critical thought are both involved.
2. *Research and Publication.* Faculty members are expected to be engaged in research and publication that may stem out of their own professional research and reflection, as that is related to the Seminary; or, it may be a direct institutional responsibility, as in Seminary-sponsored research projects. In both instances, the research and publication dimension is to be evaluated in terms of its quality and, from the Seminary's perspective, on its implications for the life of religious institutions and society.
3. *Colleague Relationships.* Being a colleague involves bringing one's individual gifts to bear in the corporate life and task of the Seminary for the good of the whole, including:

- sharing openly and honestly in decision making;
  - being willing to give and receive feedback and critiques;
  - working cooperatively once decisions are made, even if not unanimously;
  - thinking on one's own, while remaining open to the ideas and opinions of others;
  - being open to diversity in the common life in ways that stretch rather than narrow our horizons; and
  - carrying appropriate administrative responsibilities.
4. *Public Involvement and Service.* Involvement by faculty is encouraged in various activities aimed at enhancing the well being of the broader community, including membership and/or leadership in community organizations, professional associations, and other forms of service. Some public activities may inevitably be controversial. Whether this is so or not, it is expected that the faculty member, in representing oneself or the institution as a public figure, will do so in ways that are fair to colleagues in the institution, including differences of viewpoint; and that the faculty member is able to distinguish private and institutional postures in respect to the issues of the day.

During the fourth year of each contract a formal review is conducted by the Faculty Review Committee elected for that year. The procedures are as follows:

1. The faculty member writes a self-assessment report.
2. The faculty member meets with the Faculty Review Committee to clarify next steps and to receive suggestions for revisions, concerns, etc.
3. The Faculty Review Committee solicits appropriate materials to assist in the review and combines those with materials from the faculty member to assemble a dossier.
4. The president and the dean review the materials and each writes an additional statement for the file.
5. The file is circulated to every member of the core faculty before the date on which the review will be done.
6. The core faculty meets in special session, chaired by a member of the Review Committee, to discuss with the faculty member his or her situation, and to take a vote.

At the special core faculty meeting two things happen: First, there is a report from the Faculty Review Committee highlighting the affirmations and concerns that have surfaced in the review. Unless a member of the core faculty asks for further discussion, the vote for or against contract renewal is taken early in the meeting. Secret paper ballots are cast by each core faculty member and counted by the Faculty Review Committee. The vote is announced to all who are present.

Once the results of the vote are known and anxiety about the results of the vote can be left behind, the remainder of the meeting is a time of candid conversation with the faculty member about her or his teaching, research/creative output, advising/mentoring, public/professional service, and Seminary citizenship. This discussion takes place with everyone in the room, although if any member of the faculty requests it, the faculty member under consideration may be excused from a portion of the meeting. The president participates in the discussion as a member of the faculty. At the conclusion of the meeting, a member of the Faculty Review Committee summarizes the discussion in writing and formally conveys the recommendation of the faculty to the president.

After the president receives this recommendation from the faculty, the president makes his or her decision regarding renewal of the contract, taking into account overall institutional well-being. That recommendation is sent to the Academic Programs Committee of the board. The president also consults with the faculty member and gives written feedback regarding the review process and his or her recommendation.

If the recommendation of the president to the APC is different from that of the faculty vote, that information must be reported to the APC, along with the exact numbers of the faculty vote. In cases where the recommendation is for non-renewal (whether as a result of the faculty vote or presidential decision, or both), the core faculty member may ask for an additional review with the Faculty Review Committee and the president and submit additional written materials. If, after such consultations, the decision is still to recommend that the person's contract not be renewed, the faculty member is so informed by the president.

If the APC is not satisfied with the recommendation of the president, it may return the recommendation to the president and the faculty for further consideration. The APC, however, does not undertake its own review of faculty members.

### **Ongoing Faculty Nurture**

Each year, in April or May, members of the core faculty meet with the president and dean to review the prior academic year and to discuss the faculty member's work plan for the coming two years. Hartford Seminary full-time core faculty contracts involve approximately 220 days of work. This is recognizing that out of a 365-day year, there are approximately 220 days in a contract year (365 days

minus 104 weekend days, 15 to 20 official Seminary holidays, e.g., we close the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, and 20 weekdays of vacation).

In preparation for these work plan sessions, each faculty member prepares a draft proposal showing how he or she projects the use of the 220 days. Although a great deal of faculty work is divided into shorter segments of time, we find that it is helpful to ask faculty to think in terms of "days." How many days of work are required to teach a course (including preparation, class time, student consultation, and evaluation)? How many days does it take to write a book review (read the book, write the review)? How many full days are devoted to meetings, to participation in professional or ecclesiastical societies?

We recognize that the expectations of a faculty member are varied and do not merely involve work "on campus," or "narrowly for the Seminary." We want our faculty connected to scholarly and professional colleagues (e.g., attending society meetings), strengthening theological education (e.g., serving on an ATS committee or accreditation team), and involved in ecclesiastical organizations (e.g., maintaining denominational connections). This is not extra work, this is what it means to be a faculty member at Hartford Seminary. Work plans estimate the days of work anticipated, organized by categories (teaching, research, advising, community service, Seminary citizenship).

We include a sample design for a work plan. Such plans are rarely more than one or two pages. The following sample probably includes more categories than one individual might have, but a number of things are listed as examples. This sample shows what a work plan looks like when a sabbatical leave is anticipated in the second year.

**FACULTY MEMBER X**  
**Faculty Activities Report and Work Plan**  
**1995-97**

	95-96	96-97
Teaching:		
degree course (fall)	15	15
degree course (spring) (a new course / more preparation)	20	
educational outreach events for the Seminary	2	1
summer session course	15	15
Advising students:		
general master's student advising	5	
doctoral project supervision / advising	6	2
Research and project work:		
Seminary-funded research project	20	
personal book manuscript research	35	20
book review     2	4	
paper for a professional society meeting	5	
Professional societies:		
AAR/SBL national meeting	3	3
X society regional meeting	2	
Seminary administration:		
faculty meetings (10 half-day meetings one each month)	5	2
faculty retreats (fall and spring 3 days each)	6	6
other committees (search, library, curriculum, faculty review)	15	8
administration of a particular program	30	15
Seminary development:		
preaching / speaking in churches (4 half-day Sundays)	2	
Denominational meetings:		
annual conference, presbytery, diocesan meeting	3	3
Additional speeches, presentations, invitational conferences:		
international meeting (including travel)	10	
speech out of town (2 = prep.; 1 = travel)	3	
Community:		
community service agency (monthly meetings = 8)	2	1
nearby university special conference		1
Ecumenical:		
meetings of ecumenical group (two 3-day meetings)	6	6
ACTS:		
committee (two one-day meetings)	2	2
accreditation team member (two days prep. / three-day visit)	5	
SABBATICAL		110
unallocated		9
TOTALS	220	220

As each faculty member prepares his or her work plan, it is important for the faculty member to consult with faculty colleagues in his or her relevant program unit. Given the small size of the Hartford Seminary faculty, faculty who work within the Center for Social and Religious Research or in the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations work out teaching expectations and research obligations together as they prepare individual work plans.

No two faculty work plans are the same, and almost all are revised following the work plan meeting. The role of the president and the dean in the process is to balance the Seminary's overall needs and priorities, the faculty member's needs and interests, and to keep equity among work loads. Rarely are the sessions adversarial, though all recognize different interests are at stake. The give and take is healthy.

In our roles as president and dean we learn a great deal from the work plan process. Faculty are concerned about what they see as too many unproductive meetings and the need to protect research time. We have worked to make meeting times more productive, e.g., by implementing the intensive faculty search procedures mentioned earlier. We have also arranged alternate scheduling patterns: one faculty member is now concentrating on degree, certificate, and educational outreach activity in the fall and focusing upon research and writing in the spring. Faculty work load does not have to equate to a standard number of courses, student advisees, and faculty meetings.

The work plan conversation is also an opportunity to discuss a faculty member's long-term goals, including future sabbatical plans. In every session we ask what Hartford Seminary can do to help the faculty member grow personally and professionally. For example, when one of our colleagues, Thomas Hoyt, became convinced God was calling him to offer himself as a candidate for Bishop in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, we developed a work plan that enabled him to meet his faculty responsibilities while also exploring his vocational call. (He was elected in 1994 and retains a close relationship with Hartford Seminary.)

The work plan obviously focuses on Hartford Seminary activity. However, faculty are also asked to provide a list of outside involvements (past and projected). We encourage these involvements, recognizing that some faculty may choose to put personal time and energy into preaching in local congregations, consulting with national and international religious bodies, or doing various other things as volunteers or paid consultants. We appreciate knowing where the name of Hartford Seminary will be visible because of these activities, but we recognize that

these are personal choices. When and if these activities become excessive or impinge upon the work plan, we try to discuss constructively how the work plan might incorporate more of these activities. It is important to find ways to enhance the gifts and passions of a colleague, rather than limit them by rigid Seminary work load definitions.

Finally, as president and dean we also participate in the work plan process ourselves, preparing our work plans and meeting with each other and the two members of the Faculty Review Committee to discuss how our work as teachers and scholars can be balanced with our administrative responsibilities. As administrators who are also members of the faculty these sessions keep us accountable to our colleagues. Our work plans have been changed and strengthened as a result of such conversations.

Furthermore, the president regularly distributes her calendar to all faculty and staff on a weekly basis, and the dean distributes his calendar to all senior administrators. Not only does this information keep everyone informed about the activities of the administration, it suggests that faculty stewardship of time and academic work are not private matters.

In the late spring, after individual work plan sessions are completed, work plans are shared and discussed with the entire faculty, usually in a relaxed setting. This gives all an opportunity to discuss personal priorities with colleagues and to hear from others.

In summary, through the work plan we are able to maintain an equitable pattern of support for a very diverse and productive faculty. Five things happen as a result of these work plans:

1. There is a general report about a faculty member's activities during the past year. This becomes the basis for a two page single spaced report which each faculty member makes of his or her teaching, research, activities, and publications for our Annual Report to the board of trustees. This report is also distributed internally for all faculty and staff to read.
2. There is a candid conversation about how the year has gone. Were deadlines met, manuscripts finished, students enabled to finish their projects, new courses taught, grant proposals prepared, professional involvements satisfying, etc.?
3. The draft work plan for the coming year is discussed. Everyone recognizes that work plans cannot capture everything, but they attempt to summarize in a semi-quantifiable manner how each faculty member anticipates allocating time and energy during the coming year. Work plans enable the Seminary to develop norms, to challenge disproportionate time allocations, to honor creativity, and to provide a basis for mutual, informed respect.



4. There is conversation about projected extra work plan activity. This is especially important because not all core faculty appointments are full-time. Even with full-time core faculty, the Seminary does not own a faculty member's whole life. Furthermore, because Hartford Seminary contracts are 11-month contracts (with 20 days/or 4 weeks of vacation each year), and because the generous sabbatical policy (30 days/or 6 weeks of sabbatical for each year of employment) can create confusion about when people are working under their work plan or when they are consulting or doing external contract work that is not part of a Seminary grant or program, everyone needs to know what is going on.

5. These sessions enable us to think together about the long term goals of each faculty member and the ongoing needs of the Seminary. This is especially important as we make projections about anticipated sabbaticals and multi-year research obligations.

In higher education all faculty members are asked to plan their teaching and to think systematically about their research and writing. Sometimes, however, even with the best of intentions these tasks are not done very well, and it is difficult to give faculty the kind of nurture they need to excel and thrive. We believe that through the preparation of the work plan individual faculty members are given clear guidelines about institutional expectations and a concrete way to share information about their work, as well as to measure personal accomplishments. Furthermore, because work plan averages can be cited when assessing faculty load, the preparation and sharing of work plans creates an environment of equity.

We recognize that not every book, or course, or research project takes the same amount of time to write, or teach, or do—yet, there are some general patterns. The network of mutual accountability created by the use of work plans is significant. We also find that work plans help every faculty member have a more detailed sense of the work of their colleagues, even when that work does not directly impinge upon or influence his or her activities.

The selection and nurture of faculty members in this very unconventional seminary is an evolving process. Yet our size (13 core faculty members next year) is typical of many seminaries. Without the M.Div. degree, without a residential campus, without conventional departments, ranks, tenure, and teaching loads, we are developing new ways to select and nurture an extraordinary group of colleagues. We have Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the student body, and we have faculty who are Roman Catholic, Southern Baptist, Presbyterian, and Muslim. Several of our trustees are students. There is a Muslim and a rabbi on our board. The present chair of the board is a Roman Catholic.

## Choosing and Nurturing Faculty

Hartford Seminary is a different kind of seminary. Yet, we are a microcosm of the emerging religious landscape of America. Our core faculty relish the challenge of this institution and find other more conventional measures of job description, job security, and job satisfaction less attractive. Although it is not an institution where everyone will feel at home, we believe that Hartford Seminary is exploring a new way to be a seminary that will serve people of faith and religious institutions more effectively in the future.

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# Faculty Development: An Organic Perspective

*Samuel T. Logan, Jr.*  
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This article is about faculty development. Or, more accurately, it is about the development of *the faculty as a team* rather than about developing the unique strengths and gifts of individual faculty members. Of course, it is crucially important to do both, but in this particular context, I will address the corporate side directly and the individual side only indirectly.

Throughout, I will try to link what I say directly to biblical principle. I do so first because I think any such “theorizing” must be anchored somewhere and Scripture is the only sure anchor. I do so also in order to communicate the presuppositions on the basis of which I am operating. Those with other presuppositions will, of course, proceed differently. I regard it as simply fair to the reader to make clear the perspective from which I am writing.

Three caveats: First, our faculty and I are very much in process. We have learned some things together and as long as we continue together, we will learn more. All I can do at this point is share some aspects of faculty development that seem to be biblically appropriate and that seem to be effective in our institutional life. No one knows all that he or she wishes to know or all that will be known tomorrow.

Second, we must beware of any rules that do not appear specifically in the pages of the Bible. We can (and should) develop firm guidelines for our institutional lives but none of those guidelines should be regarded as infallible. In my earliest days as a seminary president, I was told that donors never give to retire debt and that, therefore, I should never ask for a gift for such a purpose. But our institution was being strangled by a half-million-dollar cumulative Annual Fund deficit, the yearly interest on which was nearly the salary of a faculty member. I thought I saw an opportunity with a particular donor. I ignored the guideline I had been taught, the gift was given, the debt was retired, and our institution is still benefiting from that event.

Whatever guidelines I suggest here need, therefore, to be regarded as just that—suggestions. The Scriptures set our fundamental direction, but institutional situations and opportunities dramatically affect the implementation of that direction.

Third, though I hold a faculty appointment as well, I write here specifically from the perspective of a president, and what I say will have its greatest relevance to others who are charged with the administrative oversight of theological schools. I hope that my suggestions will be of some value to faculty members as well. After all, the things that administrators could do to enhance and to develop their faculties should probably also be done by faculty members (with appropriate modifications) to enhance and develop their administrators and their entire institutions. We all need development and we all need one another's help to develop as we should.

### **“Seek first the Kingdom . . .”**

Fundamentally, a Christian seminary is about the work of the Kingdom of God. We all know this but, like many other “obvious” truths, we tend to neglect it, particularly when setting institutional policies and procedures. Development of the faculty starts here, with a clear and unequivocal and frequently repeated affirmation that the faculty and the administration and the staff and the students are jointly involved in a Kingdom project.

It starts here because, unless this fundamental fact is made abundantly clear in institutional life, both the faculty and the institution may actually “develop” in ways that are contrary to Kingdom priorities. Sin is as close to me as my own heart, and my own selfish interests and desires can act like a computer virus within the best of our institutional programs. All of us need constant reminding as to why we are doing what we are doing so that what we are doing will remain what we *should* be doing.

How specifically can this affirmation of our essential Kingdom orientation be made an integral part of institutional and faculty development? The following are several possibilities.

First, the chief administrator must himself or herself be seen to be Kingdom oriented. Like it or not, we set a tone for our institutions and what we model will affect all our faculty members, even those who are our seniors and superiors. If we communicate that we are building our private, personal kingdoms, we implicitly urge our faculty members to do the same.

It is extremely difficult for top-level administrators genuinely to communicate joy over the successes of administrators at “competitor” institutions. As “they” look better, “we” will look worse, and our instinctive tendency is to downplay or to cast aspersions on whatever apparent successes they enjoy and to highlight their difficulties and apparent failures.

But the Kingdom of Jesus Christ is not so small. It is not restricted to what happens at my institution and I, as a senior administrator, must make certain that the faculty with which I work actually sees me rejoicing over the Lord's blessing on other seminaries and lamenting the difficulties that my brothers and sisters at other institutions are experiencing.

This is a perspective taught so clearly by my theological "hero," Jonathan Edwards. At the end of his *History of the Work of Redemption*, which was yet unfinished when he died, Edwards summarized his view of God's marvelous work of redemption:

God's providence may not unfitly be compared to a large and long river, having innumerable branches, beginning in different regions, and at great distances one from another, and all conspiring to one common issue. . . . The different streams of this river are apt to appear like mere confusion to us, because of our limited sight, whereby we cannot see the whole at once. A man who sees but one or two streams at a time, cannot tell what their course tends to. Their course seems very crooked, and different streams seem to run for a while different and contrary ways: and if we view things at a distance, there seem to be innumerable obstacles and impediments in the way, as rocks and mountains, and the like, to hinder their ever uniting and coming to the ocean; but if we trace them, they all unite at last, all come to the same issue, disgorge themselves in one into the same great ocean. Not one of all the streams fail.

*Not one* shall fail! Not the work we do and not the work our "competitors" do. One of the most fundamental ways in which an administrator can develop his or her faculty is by instilling in them this certain knowledge. And the best way to instill it is to model it.

Of course, there will be ways in which we remain "in competition" with other theological schools. Each of us has a unique course to run and we need not minimize (indeed, we should emphasize) the value of that uniqueness. Developing a Kingdom mindset within our faculties and within our institutions requires that we demonstrate by our words and by our actions our conviction that "not one of all the streams fail."

Secondly, in addition to modeling the kind of Kingdom demeanor that affirms the ministries of others, the senior administrator must be frequently heard publicly and privately to evaluate present and proposed personnel and programs on the basis of their overall perceived contribution to the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is not just what will enhance the position and potential of our institution; what really

matters most is what will enhance the gospel itself. That must be the foundation of all evaluation procedures within the institution.

For this mindset to develop within the faculty, it must be pre-eminently manifested in the senior administrative officer. And there is no better manifestation of such a mindset than for the administrator's own evaluation to be seen throughout the institution to be Kingdom-oriented. Does the faculty know when and by whom the senior administrator is himself or herself evaluated? Is it clear that a consideration of that administrator's own spirituality and Kingdom-orientation is basic to the evaluation process each and every time it is conducted? Does the faculty have direct access to the evaluation process both in terms of input and in terms of learning expeditiously the results of the process? The answers to all of these questions must be affirmative if the faculty is to make such concerns essential to their own self-evaluation and peer evaluation. And this must, in turn, happen if the faculty is increasingly to develop into a force for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

A final way in which administrators should consciously seek to develop the Kingdom-sense of their faculties is by encouragement. Most of us know how extremely important it is to share our alumni's "success" stories with donors and potential donors. Those who give to the institution want and deserve to know what is happening through their gifts. They need to sense that their contributions are advancing the cause of the gospel and we make certain that they do get such information.

We must remember that the greatest donors we have are our faculties. They give far more than their dollars—although many give these as well. Our faculties are giving their very lives to the work represented by our seminaries and, of all people, they deserve and need to know how the Lord is blessing their efforts. I am away from home on seminary business approximately 150 days and nights a year (and I am sure that many other presidents have much more rigorous travel schedules). I thus have more opportunities to see our alumni in action than do most of our faculty. I try on every single trip I make to contact at least a couple of alumni just to find out what is happening in their lives and ministries. I then try equally hard, when I return home, to share that information with our faculty.

I want our faculty to see and to know how the years they have invested in training students are producing Kingdom dividends around the world. I want them to sense that their lives really are being "leveraged" for the sake of the gospel.

Of course, not all alumni reports are glowing and encouraging. Some of our alumni are struggling and are in need of prayer. That, too, gets shared with the

faculty because ongoing prayer for specific alumni is yet another means of intensifying the sense of the big Kingdom picture I am concerned to develop in our institution. If Jonathan Edwards is right (and I believe he is), then whatever we can do to increase the sense of that large and long river of redemption to which our local stream is contributing will make our work toward that very end even more effective.

In summary, then, what I most want to develop—in myself, in our faculty, in our entire institution—is an intense awareness of the gospel-glow of all of our activities. We have surely been saved by grace but we are just as surely to work out that salvation with fear and trembling. The more our faculties sense that that is just what they are doing, actually *working out God's gracious salvation* by their teaching, the more “developed” they will be in both their personal and their professional lives.

### **“We are all members of one body . . . ”**

While almost anything else could easily be subsumed under the Kingdom-orientation I have been discussing, it might be useful to create two other categories. My second specific development goal in the faculty I serve is the sense of “body-ness” which Paul describes in Ephesians 4 and I Corinthians 12. While institutions and faculties do change (sometimes more swiftly and sometimes more slowly than we would like), at any specific point in time, it is crucial that we have a sense of our institutional unity if we are to be any kind of effective Kingdom force.

Developing that sense of unity is a complicated, frustrating, never-completed, and joyous task.

Here are some possible means to that elusive end.

First, consult.

Second, consult again.

And third, consult again with everyone.

It is extremely difficult for an administrator who is charged with developing the vision for his or her institution not to be able just to *do it!* We see what needs to be done and we want to move ahead *now*. Consultative processes are so slow and the end results of such processes are often quite different from what we would have wished.

Institutions, however, are always bigger than single individuals, no matter how gifted those individuals may be, and the institution that relies too much on a single leader is often the most devastated when a sudden heart attack takes that

leader away. No matter how ponderous the work of a committee, no matter how strange and elephant-like the results of its efforts, these dangers are less than the dangers of a single out-of-control presidential ego.

Perhaps even more important, the *way* we lead our institutions will (whether we intend it or not) be seen as a model to our students of how they should lead their churches. Is the church really the body of Christ, with pastor and people filling different roles but ultimately responsible together for the work of ministry? Then this is how we should operate our institutions, and this means an awful lot of consultation.

Consultation is just that. It is a process by which an individual with an idea goes to another individual to seek review and evaluation of that idea. (In fact, this article was circulated among the faculty for reactions and suggestions before it was submitted.) It is the responsibility of the chief administrator to develop the ideas (the vision) of his or her institution. While some, perhaps many, of those ideas may originate with members of the institution's faculty, it is still the administrator who is responsible to make certain that a coherent pattern of ideas (again, vision) is brought before the institution.

So the administrator develops vision and *consults* with the faculty about it. We all know what consultation is, but I would like to mention a couple of ingredients which normally must be present if the end results of the process are to be genuine body-ness.

Presidential transparency is paramount. What you see is what there is. Honesty, openness, frankness—these are all crucial to the kind of consultation process that builds the body of Christ and thus develops the faculty. Whatever I am seriously considering presenting to the faculty, I share with them well before it is ready to be formally proposed. Sometimes initial negative reaction to a possibility leads me to abandon the idea. Sometimes it does not. But our faculty knows what I am thinking almost as soon as I do.

Nearly a year ago now, I began to believe that it would be important to add a certain individual to the faculty and, in our context, no one can be added to the faculty without the approval of the faculty. I realized that there were several present faculty members who would oppose this specific addition. They were among the first to whom I privately presented the idea. I was correct; they did and do oppose my proposal. I remain convinced that this addition is the right thing to do and the vast majority of the faculty seems to agree. Those who continue to oppose the action at least know this: I was “up front” with them. I did not try to hide my intentions; I did not try to manipulate them. This will make all the difference to our institutional body life if and when this specific proposal does finally go through.



Does our faculty feel that I overload them with ideas and possibilities? Probably so. Are they disappointed when some of the ideas I initially mention never come to fruition? Surely some faculty are. Such overload and disappointment are small prices to pay for a sense of openness and honesty. When what you see is what there is, what you get is “one body.”

A second ingredient in consultation is a genuine willingness to change. We worked for two years to develop a strategic plan (based upon consultation after consultation after consultation) and finally presented a full document to a joint board-faculty retreat. After eight hours of plenary discussion, I felt that we were almost there.

The next day, a faculty member, having participated in all the consultations and in the plenary discussion, placed on my desk a new version of the plan which, while it kept most of the fundamental ingredients, placed them in a totally new format and eliminated several features of the original plan that I had especially liked.

The problem was, this new version was clearly superior to the one on which I had labored so long and so hard!

There was only one thing to do: I scrapped my original version, made some modifications to this new document, presented it as the official proposal to both the faculty and the board, and it was adopted *unanimously!* What was crucial was not just the fact that we ended up with a strategic plan; what was crucial was that the entire institution knew both that it was my job to be sure we had a plan and that what they thought *really counted* in the construction of the plan.

A third facet of open, honest consultation is being single-faced. Tell the same story in the same way to everyone. Do it because it is right. Do it also because the best way to undermine the sense of unity in an institution is for the chief administrator to appear to be saying different things to different parts of the internal constituency of the institution. Conversely, the best way to build morale and confidence and trust is to make it clear that everyone gets the same version of the administrator’s position on institutional matters. Different parties within the institution will have their own positions on those same matters, and that is healthy, but if those parties sense that the chief administrator, who is responsible to set tone and vision, is saying the same thing to everyone, they can legitimately feel that the institution is “together” in a very significant way.

At least one modification must, however, be made to the general guideline of saying to everyone the same thing. We cannot, we must not, use the comments of others, even correctly quoted, in an intentional attempt to manipulate them politically.

I will never forget what was probably the worst administrative blunder I ever made (and there have been many of them)! We had had an extended debate about some subject directly affecting our students, and I was convinced that the chair of the faculty was taking a position that unnecessarily put extra pressure on students. Upon returning from the faculty meeting, I prepared a brief notice that accurately depicted the various positions taken at that meeting, and identified those who had taken them. In the notice, I urged students who had concerns about these matters to contact the appropriate faculty members. I then had my secretary distribute the notice to all enrolled students.

I suspect that no reader of this article could match the stupidity of my action in this situation (the chair of our faculty certainly could not think of anything more stupid than what I did!). But we are often tempted to less extreme versions of the same process. Claiming to tell “the truth,” we communicate information about others which is, in fact, designed somehow to manipulate them into doing what we wish them to do. The chief administrative officer of an institution, precisely because it is his or her ultimate responsibility to see that the institution moves ahead, faces the temptation more often than anyone else.

I have tried to learn from my horrible blunder. I now seek always to talk to an individual about the possibility of my presenting his or her ideas to another group before I make such a presentation. This, too, is consultation, and this, too, builds the unity at an institution.

The good results of such extensive and complex consultation are many. First and foremost, there is a broad ownership of institutional decisions and direction that gives specific substance to the Pauline affirmation that we are all one body. We are moving *together* toward that Edwardsean river and that is as it should be in a Kingdom-oriented institution. If this were all, it would be enough.

There is another side to the body-ness phenomenon which I (and, I believe, most of our faculty) have found to be an incredible personal encouragement. As frustrating as it can be to move only as fast as extensive consultation allows, the emotional and spiritual support that is engendered through that process by the members of the body for one another is a priceless treasure. Twice a month, our entire faculty meets together for an extended time of prayer; at each session, one faculty member shares in detail regarding both personal and professional matters.

Largely, I think, because we really do believe that “we are all one body,” those sessions are frank and specific, always helpful, and occasionally powerful spiritual experiences. Confronting a family crisis recently, it was to one of these prayer times that I brought my sense of need. I was as honest about that need as

I have tried to be about my dreams for our institutional future. Samuel Rutherford's comment that "grace grows best in winter," was proven true right in that very meeting.

We are all one body because that is how we best develop our institutional Kingdom potential. We are also one body because that is how we are best developed into the kinds of mature, inter-dependent Christians who best reflect the Savior we desire to serve.

### **"The laborer is worthy of his hire . . ."**

This may seem like a strange principle with which to end my discussion of faculty development, but we all know how critical the subject of remuneration is to everyone, faculty members included. The biblical principle is a sound one; it is a principle of justice; living by the principle is another way of demonstrating that we take seriously our professed Kingdom commitments.

So we must provide "worthy" remuneration; that is a given.

There is one other aspect of the remuneration question that must be addressed if the institutional qualities described above are genuinely to characterize our schools. It is crucial to the development of the "Kingdom body-ness" of our faculties that they know clearly that remunerative justice prevails in our institutions.

Let's get specific. I fervently favor salary scales—for *everyone* in the institution. For the sake of the sense of unity I have tried to describe above, I believe it is imperative that everyone in the institution know on what basis everyone else in the institution is remunerated. For both faculty and staff members in our institution, the salary scales are matters of public record, contained in the appropriate manuals.

In addition, as part of our strategic plan, we have announced overall salary goals for everyone in the institution, including those who are not covered by a specific salary scale. We have determined, for example, that it is our goal that our faculty members receive, on average, 110 percent of the average faculty salaries at ATS-accredited seminaries of our size (with each different professorial rank being tabulated separately).

We have further stated that we intend to pay all administrators other than the president at a rate equal to 100 percent of the respective averages at ATS-accredited seminaries our size. The goal for the president's salary is that it be 90 percent of the average at ATS-accredited seminaries our size.

Because we are, for most of our personnel, already at our stated goals, it is likely that we will increase those goals. The point is that we all know how remunerative “worthiness” is being determined for other members of this particular body. The goals are set for all of us after broad consultation, and they seem to be regarded as fair and reasonably objective goals.

I believe that this process, or something like it, facilitates development of *the faculty* as a team of teacher-scholars working unitedly toward the accomplishment of their specific Kingdom mission. This process, or something like it, minimizes suspicions and jealousies and dramatically enhances the sense within an institution that all are in the work together, that all the different members are one body, cooperating together in the work of seeking first the Kingdom of God.

As indicated at the beginning of this article, I am addressing here only the *corporate* side of faculty development. Development of the scholarly, didactic, and ministerial abilities of individual faculty members is also crucial. Among the many means that any institution should have in place for such individual development are: (1) institutional support for involvement of faculty in scholarly societies and conferences, (2) a strong program of professional development leaves for faculty, and (3) provisions for faculty to focus their professional development leaves on cross-cultural experiences or on intensive involvement in the life of a local church. Such *individual* faculty development is critical in order to enhance the corporate development of the faculty into the best possible Kingdom team.

As long as it remains true that the central task and the greatest joy of each faculty member (and of each president) is to participate in that “large and long river” of God’s redemption of His people, just so long might faculty development along the lines suggested above be, itself, a redemptive activity. If it is, that would surely be the best reason for us to pursue it.

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# Evaluating an Uncertain Craft: Faculty Assessment and Theological Education

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Many faculty regard evaluation with apprehension or even trepidation. Their wariness is well-founded, for a number of reasons. Professors have generally had minimal preparation for teaching; thus, to be judged on a dimension of their work that was typically neglected in their doctoral studies can be daunting. The rigor with which their examinations, papers, and dissertations were supervised in graduate school was seldom equaled with regard to their teaching—if indeed, they had any mentoring at all in teaching. “Rigor” may even seem a strange term to apply to teaching. Because evaluation of teaching is often synonymous with student evaluations, the process seems weighed in favor of the charismatic personality or the engaging lecturer. So evaluation is often associated with popularity rather than rigor.

Moreover, many questions arise about the credibility and purposes of evaluation. Administrators responsible for implementing evaluation processes may be far removed from the classroom or have a reputation for being poor or mediocre teachers themselves. What qualifies someone to evaluate another’s teaching? Further, to what ends will the evaluation be used? Will evaluation be an unwarranted invasion of the professor’s classroom, thereby restricting academic freedom?

Evaluation inevitably arouses personal insecurities. One is the “impostor syndrome”: deep down, many of us feel we’re not nearly as capable as our peers, and we perceive everyone else as being more capable and confident. Stephen Brookfield, a leading theorist of adult education who coins this term, rightly notes that a sense of inadequacy affects not only students but teachers. He confesses to feeling fraudulent himself, noting his own qualms when he speaks at a conference or addresses a group of teachers. How, he wonders, will he have anything meaningful to say to this audience, so rich in experience and working with such insight and innovation? What could they possibly have had in mind in inviting him?<sup>1</sup>

It is not only feeling like a fraud at times. It is feeling vulnerable. Educational philosopher Margret Buchmann writes: “[Teaching] demands . . . a sturdy self on

the part of the teacher, combined 'with a yielding and receptive character of soul' incompatible with undue concern for self-protection or advancement."<sup>2</sup> But many days we feel less than "sturdy," so our encounters with students and colleagues are not always edifying. And when an evaluation involves a potential loss of promotion or even of job, our worry for self-protection or advancement may understandably be "undue concern."

Even those who feel relatively adequate to the task have reason to be anxious: teaching is a complex task. Will evaluation reflect this complexity? So much of the current literature on teaching emphasizes the intricacy, mystery, and artistry of teaching—and evaluation seems to stress the observable, quantifiable, and pragmatic dimensions. If, for example, "as teachers we cross the borders of chaos to inhabit zones of ambiguity," then what sort of evaluative instrument can accurately track our location?<sup>3</sup> If as teachers we encounter so many multifarious situations, plan for so many diverse circumstances, and make so many decisions while teaching, that as Lee Shulman argues in a memorably entitled article, "It's Harder To Teach in Class than To Be a Physician," then by what standards are we appropriately judged?<sup>4</sup> If, in Joseph McDonald's terms, we are caught up in a "wild triangle" of relations, then will evaluations mirror it?

Real teaching, I learned in time, happens inside a wild triangle of relations—among teacher, students, subject—and the points of this triangle shift continuously. What shall I teach amid all that I might teach? How can I grasp it myself so that my grasping may enable theirs? What are they thinking and feeling—toward me, toward each other, toward the thing I am trying to teach? How near should I come, how far off should I stay? How much clutch, how much gas?<sup>5</sup>

In short, teaching is an "uncertain craft" that draws its practitioners into a spiral of self-involving questions, and involves, in Maxine Greene's sage observation, "multiple small uncertainties."<sup>6</sup> Buchmann aptly describes the uncertainty:

Teaching demands recognizing that students and teaching subjects can neither be known altogether, nor once and for all. The more teachers think about their subjects, the less they are sure of their ground, becoming clearer about the limits of their understanding and coming to share in the 'learned uncertainty' of scholars. The more they contemplate their students, the more they will become aware of the fact that their knowledge of them is

imperfect and constructed, a fallible vision also because people change, and are supposed to change, in school.<sup>7</sup>

Accordingly, evaluations intended to foster better teaching must be done with enormous care and with expertise. Unrefined evaluative instruments or insensitively managed evaluative processes can do more harm than good by treating teaching as a prosaic, routine activity instead of as a sublime vocation.<sup>8</sup> Unimaginative evaluations implicitly encourage uninspired teaching and discourage faculty from risking creative ventures. Poorly administered evaluations damage morale, fueling resentment and distrust between faculty and administrators.

Because judicious evaluation is so difficult and shoddy evaluation so risky, the temptation is to avoid it altogether. This temptation must be banished: evaluation is indispensable to the health of a school, particularly a theological school. In order to make that case, I will first explore three reasons for evaluation and then explore a model for peer assessment of faculty.

## Why Evaluation?

However complicated the construction and implementation of evaluation, it is essential for three reasons. The first is a matter of justice: teaching is one's fundamental obligation as a faculty member, and evaluation provides a critical tool for honing one's abilities to meet that obligation. Another reason for evaluation centers on the professional and communal character of teaching: professionalism implies evaluation, and evaluation fosters collegiality. Evaluation is necessary for a third reason: insuring that the system of promotion and tenure and salary adjustments (e.g., merit increases) is judiciously implemented. A word on each of these reasons, particularly on the first.

### *Teaching: The Fundamental Obligation*

To claim that teaching is *the* fundamental obligation of the faculty member may appear either obvious or naïve. Perhaps only those outside the academy believe teaching is central; insiders know that research and publication are the true fundamentals. In the academy's implicit curriculum (that which is taught by being affirmed or reinforced or, conversely, by being sanctioned), recognition is primarily accorded those who publish, get large grants, or engage in high-profile research. Schools may on occasion offer a "distinguished teacher award" (often based solely on student opinion) or give a summer grant for designing an innovative course, but in general the system favors the measurable, such as refereed articles in learned journals and books by prestigious publishers.

Not unsurprisingly, many faculty experience a high degree of frustration: teaching is labor intensive—preparation, instruction, advisement, evaluation—and takes time away from the “one thing necessary” for advancement: publication. It is little wonder, as Mark Schwehn observes, that faculty lament, “I don’t have enough time to do my own work,” by which they mean, “I’m not getting enough writing/composing/experimenting done.”<sup>9</sup> As long as this is the lament, then faculty evaluation will be ineffective. Evaluation holds neither power nor promise when it assesses the least important element of one’s work. Only when institutions—administrators and faculty together—begin to regard teaching as a significant embodiment of scholarship will evaluation carry meaning.

Schwehn is instrumental in offering a reasoned and passionate presentation of such an understanding in his critique and revision of Max Weber’s conception of the academic calling.<sup>10</sup> He proposes, first, that teaching rather than *Wissenschaft* become *the* activity central to the understanding of all others (e.g., publication, research, consultation, advising):

To maintain that teaching becomes *the* activity in terms of which all the others are to be understood is very different from saying merely that teaching should be more important than each of the two other members of the proverbial academic trinity—research, teaching, and collegiality. The former claim represents a conceptual shift, the latter a minor rearrangement of established priorities. So, for example, to construe *writing as a fundamentally pedagogical act* [emphasis added] means, among other things, that the scholarly monograph becomes but one of the several genres of writing honored by the academic community. General rhetorical and pedagogical principles, not simply the more narrowly defined disciplinary conventions, provide the standards by which written work is assessed.<sup>11</sup>

Thus Schwehn argues that a proper question in evaluating a faculty member is whether or not a colleague “has achieved a desirable balance between written and oral modes of pedagogy.”<sup>12</sup> Another appropriate question focuses on sensitivity to audience: is the clarity about for whom and to whom one is writing as evident as the clarity about the subject of the writing?

Two other dimensions of the academic calling figure prominently in Schwehn’s argument: cultivation of spiritual virtues—humility, faith, self-denial, and justice—that foster genuine teaching and learning, and restoration of charity and *philia* (particularly Aristotle’s notion of friendship in *The Nicomachean Ethics*) to the central mission of the institution. The practice of such virtues is manifest, for instance, in the judicious and generous way other thinkers are appraised



(whether in class or in an essay) so that participants may, in Jeffrey Stout's terms, be "caught up in a conversation that leads to unexpected self-understanding."<sup>13</sup> Without the virtue of friendship, moreover, "academic life threatens to become a mere technological project."<sup>14</sup>

Schwehn is arguing for the necessity of religious resources in the academy—surely an argument a theological school must find persuasive if its practice of the academic life is to match its rhetoric. Of greatest pertinence here, however, is his insistence that teaching orders all other activities. Teaching, consequently, becomes the centripetal force in faculty evaluations. It is *the* fundamental obligation of the faculty.

Schwehn's argument regarding the importance of the virtues in teaching and learning also illumines an important aspect of professionalism. Originally, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word "profess" was used only in the passive, "to be professed" [in one's religion, as in taking vows]; used transitively, it meant "to declare openly, announce, affirm; to acknowledge, avow, confess." Much seems to be lost from these earlier meanings; today, "professional" connotes an elite class. A carefully crafted evaluative process, however, can stimulate teachers to articulate and practice what they do profess—and to learn ways of professing more deeply and wholeheartedly. One of the advantages of working collegially in establishing a process of evaluation is that the conversation it requires among faculty and administrators stimulates discussion of vital issues. Vital issues about race and gender will have to be addressed if the classroom is taken seriously.<sup>15</sup> The process of constructing, refining, and implementing an evaluative process may be as important as the outcomes of that process.

### ***Assessment: A More Collegial Term***

Such conversations have potential for building community—even for fostering friendship, as Schwehn hopes. Toward that end, it may be useful to speak of faculty assessment rather than evaluation. As Larry Braskamp and John Ory suggest in their comprehensive *Assessing Faculty Work*, the etymology of "assessment"—*assidere*, L., "to sit beside"—offers a suggestive image.<sup>16</sup> It evokes words like engagement, interaction, sharing, trusting that in turn connote such terms as collaboration, coaching, and cooperative learning. "When two people 'sit beside' each other, engaged in assessing, one may very well be judging and providing feedback about the other's performance, but the style and context of the exchange are critical. 'Sitting beside' implies dialogue and discourse, with one person trying to understand the other's perspective before giving value judgments."<sup>17</sup>

This “sitting beside” one’s colleagues does not preclude using student evaluations, but it reduces the reliance on them. Student evaluations constitute an important but limited dimension of the whole evaluative process. Students can appropriately make judgments about such elements of the course as work load, accessibility of texts and resources, fairness of grading, and the clarity of the professor’s communication. They also have the right to speak to ethical matters, such as the professionalism of the faculty member’s behavior. Students, however, are less adequate judges of the quality of a professor’s scholarship or of the soundness of the course content. Moreover, student ratings are subject to a number of influences; Braskamp and Ory helpfully summarize these.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, Stephen Brookfield offers a word of advice about reactions from students. He notes that hostile student evaluations may be given more credibility than is warranted. Because many of the most significant learning episodes involve pain, anxiety, and challenge, “they may inspire resentment in students against the apparent cause of these emotions . . . . Knowing that the expression of such hostility might be interpreted as a sign of your pedagogic competence as much as a sign of your inadequacy is an important defense against the debilitating depression that often accompanies receiving a poor evaluation.”<sup>19</sup>

### *Assessment in Promotion and Tenure Cases*

Because assessment can provide faculty members with invaluable information and with the perspectives of colleagues, it plays an important formative role in their development. Thus, it should be used frequently and informally. But institutions also rely on assessment for summative purposes as a means of accountability. Institutional assessment, though less frequent and more formal, plays a key role in the process of promotion and tenure, as well as in salary adjustments. Precisely because so much is at stake for both individual and institution, these assessments must be done with the utmost care. It thereby takes the promotion and tenure process out of the shadowy nether world of over-reliance on a single instrument (e.g., student evaluations) and the imprecise impressions of an untrained observer (e.g., a faculty member reluctantly pressed into service) and puts it in the light of categories made clear through discussion, experimentation, and collaboration.

Moreover, these assessments must cover the full range of faculty work. A professional engages in a wide array of activities, and an institution must frame its assessments accordingly. Faculty deserve acknowledgment of the broad sweep of activities in which they engage.<sup>20</sup> Braskamp and Ory suggest that the diverse tasks of faculty can be categorized in four general areas: the work of teaching, the

work of research and creative activity, the work of practice and professional service, and the work of citizenship. Although they provide extensive detail, their fourfold heuristic can be broadly outlined as follows:

**I. The Work of Teaching**

Instructing

Advising, supervising, guiding, and mentoring students

Developing learning activities

Developing as a teacher

**II. The Work of Research and Creative Activity**

Conducting research

Producing creative works

Editing and managing creative works

Leading and managing funded research and creative projects

**III. The Work of Practice and Professional Service**

Conducting applied research and evaluation

Disseminating knowledge

Developing new products, practices, and clinical procedures

Participating in partnerships with other agencies

Performing clinical service

**IV. The Work of Citizenship**

Contributing to the local campus

Contributing to disciplinary and professional associations and societies

Contributing to other communities

Braskamp and Ory develop their heuristic with precision, including identification of types of evidence appropriate for judging each category, and a suggestive sample of resources (e.g., faculty development plans, student course evaluation form, advising survey, classroom observation rating form). *Assessing Faculty Work* is the single most helpful source I have seen, particularly when Schwehn's insistence on teaching as ordering all activities is superimposed upon their categories. An institution's leadership would benefit immeasurably from close scrutiny of the book's content and from using and adapting its numerous charts and forms. It may be revelatory for a theological faculty largely unfamiliar with educational literature to discover what extensive thinking has been done on the topic of faculty evaluation.

Braskamp and Ory deserve careful consultation, not mere summary. So, too, do a number of works that I believe are fundamental to faculty development and

that, therefore, should be part of the working library of every dean, department chair, and faculty development committee. Thus, I have appended a list of essential resources to this essay.

Rather than repeat Braskamp and Ory, let me conclude with a model for peer assessment specifically designed for a theological faculty.<sup>21</sup>

## **A Model for Peer Assessment**

This model structures a conversation among peers about teaching. Having our colleagues “sit beside” us in listening to our thinking about a particular course, “sitting in on” at least one of the class sessions, and returning to once again “sit beside” us offers new perspectives on our goals, methods, and hopes. It also stimulates collaboration among a faculty.

Two dimensions of this model are described below: a protocol and guidelines for observing a class. Both dimensions are based on the assumption that what one seeks is not a judgment about a faculty member’s personality but an appraisal of the course. Hence, it is most useful to get information that engenders thinking about the components of the course: presentations, discussions, assignments, and texts (also laboratory work in some courses). Peer assessment is intended first and foremost to help teachers rethink the design and components of the course.

In addition, three other elements of faculty assessment should complement this model: (1) a system of student evaluations, (2) the faculty member’s own assessment through a portfolio or portrait, and (3) sponsorship of “conversations on teaching.” Each of these three will be briefly addressed.

### ***Part I: The Protocol***

#### ***Meeting between faculty member and consultant(s)***

The faculty member orients the consultant(s) to fundamental approaches of his or her teaching. Discussion may include general issues (e.g., goals, characteristic approaches, typical structure of course, previous student evaluations), as well as specific matters (e.g., problematic issues in a course, a desire to try alternate methods).

The faculty member should brief the consultant about the particular course to be observed, using the syllabus, calendar, bibliography, and other handouts as resources. They agree on the class session to be observed, and the faculty member explains where that particular session fits within the course as a whole.

The faculty member and consultant(s) examine the basic categories of the guidelines (course organization, presentations, discussions, texts, assignments, and evaluations), and together decide which of these guidelines the consultant(s) should emphasize in the classroom observation(s). Once the basic categories are agreed to, the faculty member should also agree with the consultant(s) about specific dimensions of each of the categories (see *Part II, Guidelines for Observation of a Class* for sample questions to frame the observation).

### ***Observation of a class session(s) and follow-up meeting***

The consultant(s) sits in on at least one full class session, taking special note of the emphases agreed to in the prior meeting with the faculty member. Extensive notes should be taken so as to provide specific data for the follow-up discussion. (Videotaping may also be considered.)

The consultant(s) and faculty member meet following the classroom observation, preferably within 48 hours. The primary purpose of this conversation is to analyze and interpret what the consultant noted. This meeting, although focused on the session observed, may also raise issues that either the faculty member or the consultant(s) recommend be brought to the teaching development committee (e.g., a request for a workshop on facilitating discussion or on appropriate ways to respond to student diversity).

### ***Documentation of the evaluation***

The faculty member and the consultant(s) jointly prepare a brief report of the process for the dean or department chair.

This report constitutes one aspect of the assessment of the teaching of the faculty member. (Student and self-evaluations also contribute to this.) In cases of tenure and/or promotion, the report becomes part of the candidate's dossier.

## ***Part II: Guidelines for Observation of a Class***<sup>22</sup>

### ***Quality of course organization***

Does the syllabus provide a clear sense of the direction of the course and of the methods that will be used to fulfill the goals?

Does the instructor provide a way for students to offer suggestions and constructive criticism at any point in the course?

Does the construction of the course seem to provide ways of engaging students with the scholarly discipline (e.g., "doing" theology or exegesis) rather than simply learning about it?

### *Quality of presentations*

- Do presentations generally have coherence and an orderly flow of ideas?
- Do they give people a context for the particular topic?
- Does the lecturer actually engage herself or himself with participants?
- Is there “breathing space” (silences and time for questions and comments)?
- Is this a living presentation, that is, one that does not duplicate that which could have been read?

### *Quality of discussion*

- Has the instructor helped to prepare participants for discussion—or does it seem to be sprung upon them?
- Does discussion have focus and a sense of closure?
- How much time is devoted to discussion? Does it seem appropriate to the subject?
- Are the majority involved, or do a few dominate?
- Is the atmosphere encouraging to mutual exploration of ideas?
- In particular, does the instructor show respect for the students’ ideas?
- Is there an attempt to be sensitive to differences in gender, nationality, or ethnicity?

### *Quality of texts and other course materials*

- Do they seem to stimulate thinking?
- Are they well-written or well-produced?
- What is the balance between primary and secondary sources?
- Is help given so that students learn to read texts intelligently, especially primary sources?

### *Quality of assignments and evaluation*

- Is the course organized in such a fashion that different styles of learning are honored?
- Is opportunity given for class members to learn from the experiences of others and to engage in collaborative learning?
- Are assignments perceived to be helpful or as “busy work”?
- Is the instructor thorough, prompt, and constructive in giving evaluation?
- Is the instructor available to the students?

This model is predicated in part on a faculty member’s willingness to take student appraisal seriously, both in terms of general responses to one’s style of

teaching and of specific issues in a particular class. Part of the conversation between faculty member and consultant(s), for instance, might involve the consultant inquiring about how the students find the texts, or whether the students seem satisfied with the amount and nature of discussion. Some simple instruments might be developed whereby the faculty member surveys the course participants at midterm to get their appraisal of specific aspects of the course. More extensive student evaluations at the conclusion of a course may still be done, but getting student views at critical junctures provides a sense of what's working and what might be rethought.

Although this model of peer assessment should play an important role in the process of promotion and/or tenure of a faculty member, it does not replace another critical element in the process: self-evaluation by way of a portfolio or portrait rather than simply by submitting a curriculum vitae and publications. Creating a portfolio or portrait allows faculty members to offer a fuller account of their work by featuring the thinking that has gone into their courses, the kinds of resources they have created, samples of student learning, and other materials descriptive of their lives as teachers. Peter Seldin's *The Teaching Portfolio* provides a clear rationale and various examples.<sup>23</sup> Braskamp and Ory synthesize the recent literature in their chapter on "Records and Portfolios," and offer specific recommendations for what might be included.<sup>24</sup> Faculty will undoubtedly find the initial construction of a portfolio or portrait to be time consuming. It is time well spent, however, because it reinforces the centrality of teaching and offers those with responsibility for promotion and tenure decision a more adequate picture of the candidate.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, peer assessment will likely generate requests for assistance in pedagogy. One way of responding to these is for the leadership (e.g., dean or faculty development committee) to initiate informal and regular opportunities for faculty members to share what has worked for them in the classroom, try new techniques, talk about their goals as teachers, and establish ways of becoming resources for one another. For instance, the sponsors might invite a couple of senior faculty to discuss "How My Mind Has Changed" about teaching theology/Bible/church history/ethics/practical theology. Or they might organize a meal around a sharing on topics such as the following: (1) enhancing collaborative learning, (2) offering students more helpful evaluations, (3) lecturing with more verve, (4) strengthening active participation, including such specific techniques as role play and case studies, and (5) designing fairer tests.<sup>26</sup>

Implementing a comprehensive framework for faculty assessment around peer assessment, complemented by student evaluations and self portraits, sus-

tains faculty members in working together to honor their fundamental obligations as teachers. It also fosters collegiality and provides substantial information for promotion and tenure cases, as well as for salary adjustments. Perhaps faculty wariness about evaluation may never be converted into enthusiasm, but a well-designed and carefully managed program of faculty assessment may transfigure initial trepidation into thoughtful consideration of the vocation of teaching.

### **Essential Works for Faculty Assessment and Development in Theology Schools and Departments**

Larry A. Braskamp and John C. Ory, *Assessing Faculty Work: Enhancing Individual and Institutional Performance* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994).

Stephen D. Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990).

Margret Buchmann, *The Careful Vision: How Practical Is Contemplation in Teaching?* Issue paper 89-1 (Michigan State University: National Center for Research on Teacher Education, 1989).

Barbara Gross Davis, *Tools for Teaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).

David H. Kelsey, *To Understand God Truly: What's Theological about a Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).

Mark R. Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

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## ENDNOTES

1. Stephen D. Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 44-45, 57-58.
2. Margret Buchmann, *The Careful Vision: How Practical Is Contemplation in Teaching?* Issue Paper 89-1 (Michigan State University: National Center for Research on Teacher Education, 1989), 18.
3. Brookfield, 3.
4. Lee S. Shulman, "It's Harder To Teach in Class than To Be a Physician," *Stanford School of Education News* (Autumn 1983:3).
5. Joseph P. McDonald, *Teaching: Making Sense of an Uncertain Craft* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992), 1.
6. Maxine Greene, *The Teacher as Stranger* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1973), 220.
7. Buchmann, 18.
8. See Robert Inchausti, *Spitwad Sutras: Classroom Teaching as Sublime Vocation* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1993), 163. Consider this reflection from Inchausti's mentor, Brother Blake: "...all education of the spirit is indirect. It has to be. The soul is shy, like a deer, and can't be approached straight-on. Poetics is the 'science' of the indirection. Its essence is metaphor, irony, myth—the arts of the tangential. Once you turn teaching into a method with precise definitions and a rigid game plan, you kill it, because you eliminate the 'give' inherent in poetic language. You destroy the space within the words where individuals can find themselves. You build edifices of meaning, beautiful, great skyscrapers of relationships, but the deer disappear into the underbrush."
9. Mark R. Schwehn, *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 4.
10. Cf. David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), esp. 12-19, 49-94, 155-198.
11. *Ibid.*, 59.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Stout cited in *Ibid.*, 60.
14. *Ibid.*, 62.
15. See Laura L. B. Border and Nancy Van Note Chism, *Teaching for Diversity*, *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, #49 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992); John A. Williams, *Classroom in Conflict: Teaching Controversial Issues in a Diverse Society* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).
16. Larry A. Braskamp and John C. Ory, *Assessing Faculty Work: Enhancing Individual and Institutional Performance* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994).
17. *Ibid.*, 13.
18. *Ibid.*, 177-184.
19. Brookfield, 207.
20. For an especially useful development of teaching as "pedagogical reasoning and action," see Lee S. Shulman, "Knowledge and Teaching," *Harvard Educational Review* 57 / 1 (1987): 1-22.

## Evaluating an Uncertain Craft

21. In 1992-93, I chaired a committee on faculty evaluation for the department of theology at Boston College. Our committee (including J. Cheryl Exum [now of the University of Sheffield] and H. John McDargh) proposed a model quite similar to the one outlined here. The department voted to adopt it, but I have not followed its implementation.
22. These guidelines are intended to frame the observation, not to restrict it. Not every question will be applicable to every class session or even every course.
23. Peter Seldin, *The Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions* (Boston: Anker Publishing, 1991).
24. Braskamp and Ory, 226-238.
25. The new process for national certification of teachers by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards requires candidates to compile portfolios of their work, including videotapes of their classes, lesson plans, student work, and analyses of their work. In addition, candidates must evaluate videos of other teachers, pass tests on their knowledge, and devise comprehensive lesson plans on designated topics. See "First 81 Teachers Qualify for National Certification," *New York Times*, January 6, 1995.
26. A very useful manual is Barbara Gross Davis, *Tools for Teaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993). Jane Vella's *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994) would provoke a stimulating discussion on honoring adults in the educational process.

# Standards for Innovation: The Case for Theological Librarians

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Libraries are complex, costly, and rapidly changing parts of theological schools. While The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) has sponsored significant studies about theological libraries, the librarians who preside over these facilities have received minimal attention.<sup>1</sup> As a result, librarians often find themselves on uncertain ground during institutional discussions of issues such as promotion, evaluation, tenure, and faculty status.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, administrators in theological institutions have little in the way of standards or literature to draw upon when formulating policies for the librarian. The dearth of information is in marked contrast to the extensive material that exists about classroom faculty or college and university librarians.<sup>3</sup>

This article resulted from the authors' experiences with evaluation, promotion, tenure, and faculty status. As a "reality check," we conducted an informal survey of a number of our colleagues. While not a scientific study, the survey confirmed our initial suspicions about the wide range of titles, areas of responsibility, terms of contract, and procedures for promotion that exist for librarians in ATS institutions. With only slight exaggeration, we can say that no two schools operate using the same procedures! Current ATS efforts to rethink accreditation standards provide a timely opportunity to consider the lack of uniformity and the multiplicity of expectations that affect the librarian.

We begin with an examination of the ATS standards for the librarian. For the sake of comparison, we review standards for librarians developed by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the Association of American Colleges (AAC), and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association. Then we survey various procedures for promotion, evaluation, and contract that exist for librarians in ATS institutions. Finally, we offer some suggestions to address the ambiguities faced by librarians.

Librarians are frequently an exception in bylaws and faculty handbooks, if they are mentioned at all. They are almost always treated as hybrids. Some

seminaries work out a unique set of personnel procedures for the librarian, sometimes intentionally and sometimes by default. Other seminaries fit the librarian into existing personnel procedures for classroom faculty and administrators. Both kinds of arrangements can and do work some of the time, hence many productive and satisfied librarians view ongoing reflection on these questions as distractions. Yet, it is also clear that sometimes the arrangements do not work. Librarians in those situations are left with nagging doubts about their standing, status, and procedures pertaining to their employment. In some cases, the absence of clear policies and expectations threatens productivity and morale.

The call for papers for this issue of *Theological Education* mentioned innovative strategies on topics such as tenure, promotion, and evaluation. Ironically, the innovation for theological librarians would be to have the question of standards addressed as they have been for other faculty. We argue implicitly that innovative strategies in librarianship need to be based on clearly defined standards.

The ATS guidelines say little expressly about the librarian, unless the sections about faculty under general institutional standards and various policy statements about faculty cover librarians as well.<sup>4</sup> In the library section of the former, the *ATS Bulletin* states, "The library administrator should ordinarily possess graduate degrees in both library science and theology, and ordinarily be a voting member of the faculty. The administrator should also be an ex-officio member of any administrative group wherein long-range planning for educational and financial policies which affect the library are determined."<sup>5</sup> This statement speaks to training, status, and peer issues, while leaving many questions unanswered. For example, if the librarian "should ordinarily possess graduate degrees in both library science and theology," what other combination of qualifications might be considered appropriate? Furthermore, if the librarian should "ordinarily be a voting member of the faculty," does it mean that ordinarily the librarian will be sufficiently credentialed to be a voting member of the faculty? Does the librarian, then, share the same privileges as the faculty? Is it possible to conclude that if the librarian is not so qualified, he or she will not be a voting member? Does the administrative group mentioned refer to standing committees of the faculty, to planning groups such as an administrative cabinet, or to long-range planning committees? Or does it mean all three? Although the ATS statement offers some guidance, the brevity and vagueness limit its usefulness—at least from the perspective of the librarian.

The 1990 issue of *The AAUP: Policy Documents and Reports* contains a "Joint Statement of Faculty Status of College and University Librarians," issued originally in 1973 by the AAUP, the AAC, and the ACRL.<sup>6</sup> It declares, among other things, that the "librarian who provides . . . guidance [on gaining access to the storehouse of organized knowledge] plays a major role in the learning process . . . Librarians perform a teaching and research role inasmuch as they instruct students formally and informally and advise and assist faculty in their scholarly pursuits. Librarians are also themselves involved in the research function; many conduct research in their own professional interests and in the discharge of their duties." The statement continues, "Where the role of college and university librarians . . . requires them to function essentially as part of the faculty, this functional identity should be recognized by the granting of faculty status. Neither administrative responsibilities nor professional degrees, titles, or skills, *per se*, qualify members of the academic community for faculty status. The *function* of the librarian as participant in the process of teaching and research is the essential criterion of faculty status." Furthermore, "[f]aculty status entails for librarians the same rights and responsibilities as for other members of the faculty. They should have corresponding entitlement to rank, promotion, tenure, compensation, leaves, and research funds, and the protection of academic due process. They must go through the same process of evaluation and meet the same standards as other faculty members."<sup>7</sup> This statement raises a number of interesting ideas, chief among them, the role of *function* in setting patterns of employment. We shall return to this functional distinction. It is worth considering that while an institution may follow AAUP policies for classroom faculty, it may not even be aware of AAUP's policy statement on librarians.

The "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians" published by ACRL reiterate much in the joint AAUP-AAC-ACRL statement, with some distinctions and elaboration. A key notion is that "[c]ollege and university librarians are partners with other faculty in the academic experience. A true partnership based on equivalent contributions translates to equal rights and privileges for all faculty members."<sup>8</sup> In other words, for librarians to have faculty status means that librarians ought to have the same evaluation processes, access to tenure, sabbatical leaves, research, and development funds and academic freedom as are available to other faculty. Several standards illustrate this point: "Librarians should be covered by tenure policies equivalent to those of other faculties . . . Librarians should be promoted in rank on the basis of their academic proficiency and professional effectiveness (job performance, service, and scholarship) . . . The standards [for promotion] used by the library should be consistent

with the campus standards for faculty . . . . Sabbatical and other research leaves should be available to librarians on the same basis, and with the same requirements, as they are available to other faculty.”<sup>9</sup> In distinction from the “Joint Statement,” the ACRL guidelines argue that all professional librarians ought to have faculty status including access to tenure. While this is inconsistent with the functional distinctions posed by the “Joint Statement” quoted above, the constant reminder for equal treatment may be helpful.

Because little data exist from which to make comparisons or recommendations about evaluation, promotion, tenure, and faculty status for librarians, the authors circulated a brief questionnaire to a group of their peers in varied institutional settings. The questionnaire asked about job descriptions, lines of authority, evaluation procedures, official title, educational background, faculty rank and status, tenure, percentage of time spent in various activities, and job satisfaction. Twenty-four librarians in independent theological schools responded, as did eight librarians in university-related schools. Twenty are men; 12 are women. These librarians serve in theologically and denominationally diverse institutions. The size of the libraries these professionals manage ranges from 58,000 volumes to 452,000 volumes.<sup>10</sup> Their answers provide a basis for reflection and invite questions about standardization or, more aptly, the lack thereof.

The librarians replied in various ways when asked about their relative positions within their institutions, some with confusion, some with exasperation, some with humor. Typical comments included: “Issues of rank and status are a little murky here;” “. . . [M]y position’s place within the total structure seems to call for attention;” “There would be wisdom in having the role and function [of the librarian] more clearly defined;” “Librarians in academic institutions worry overly much . . . about status rather than its basis;” “I guess I’m here now by the president’s and/or dean’s good graces or by my own recognizance.”

The responses gain credence when we consider the variety of procedures and patterns for librarians at ATS schools. Most institutions provide a description of the librarian in the faculty handbook or, occasionally, in the constitution or bylaws. However, few institutions elaborate on specific procedures for appointment, evaluation, tenure, etc. for the librarian as they do for classroom faculty. Such elaboration is not necessary if the librarian is covered by the policies for other faculty, but this is not always the case. In a number of the university-related schools, librarians are subject to personnel policies that govern the entire library system, rather than to classroom faculty criteria.

Librarians occupy different places on their institutions' organizational charts. In independent schools, most librarians report to the academic dean. Some librarians deal with more than one individual, for example, one person concerning administrative business and another about academic affairs. A few librarians described informal lines of communication to another official, usually the president. Some institutions have appointed library committees, composed of either faculty or trustees or both, to advise the librarian. At university-related schools, most librarians answer directly to the chief executive officer of the divinity school. However, a few report to the director of the university library, with less formal communication with the divinity school administration.

The person to whom the librarian reports usually has responsibility for evaluation, though sometimes other faculty or library committees may be involved. Often, informal evaluative discussions with the dean may take place annually, with formal reviews every three or five years. In a minority of schools, regular evaluations of the librarian do not occur, even though procedures may be in place to conduct such reviews.

The ATS guideline that the librarian serve as an ex-officio member of any administrative groups charged with long-range planning for educational and financial policies seems to be interpreted in a variety of ways or completely ignored. In independent schools, an equal number of librarians participate as members of an administrative council or cabinet as do not. Some attend administrative staff meetings at a lower level, such as a dean's staff meeting, that includes directors of field education, continuing education, admissions, etc. All the university divinity school librarians belong to an administrative council, and, in some cases, their involvement includes both a seminary council and a similar body for university librarians.

Most institutions use titles for the librarian that combine professional position and faculty ranking, for example, "Librarian and Professor of Theological Bibliography."<sup>11</sup> In a few cases, the faculty designation signifies subject specialty, such as, ministry or theology, e.g., "Librarian and Assistant Professor of Ministry." For other librarians, the title reflects only the professional position, e.g., "Director of the Library."<sup>12</sup>

Almost universally, librarians have earned more than one master's degree. Many have a master's degree and a doctoral degree, or multiple masters' degrees as well as a doctorate. The masters' degrees usually include a subject degree, for example, M.Div. or Th.M.,<sup>13</sup> and a degree in librarianship. Most librarians who have earned a doctoral degree have done so in the traditional theological disci-

plines. No one who responded to the survey has a doctorate in library science. Interestingly, only about one-sixth of those surveyed do not have a master's degree in librarianship; however, all of these individuals have both a doctorate and more than one other master's degree.

All of the librarians in independent schools who hold a doctorate, whether or not they also have a library science degree, have both faculty rank and status.<sup>14</sup> In comparing the university-based divinity school librarians, no apparent pattern exists linking faculty rank and status to the number of degrees earned. All the librarians have faculty status; some have faculty rank as well.<sup>15</sup>

Institutions define rank and status in different ways, with the former generally more easily described than the latter. Often attempts to distinguish between the two prove difficult. Schools that give librarians faculty rank commonly use the titles assistant professor, associate professor, or professor. Faculty status usually includes some combination of voice and vote in faculty meetings, appointment to faculty committees, eligibility for sabbaticals, research funds, committee assignments, classroom teaching, and tenure, the last being the most elusive. Most librarians can participate fully in faculty meetings, whether or not they are ranked; however, at some schools, voting is restricted to non-tenure issues, unless the librarian has tenure or its equivalent. Faculty committee assignments seem generally open to librarians, again regardless of ranking, occasionally to the despair of those who would prefer to focus energy elsewhere. Many librarians also qualify for sabbaticals and research funds, although for some, this involves a special appeal beyond that required of other faculty.

When asked about promotion and the basis for it, only librarians with rank in independent schools reported the possibility of promotion, and then the normal assistant, associate, full professor designations pertain. The criteria for classroom faculty, such as scholarship and service to the institution, generally apply to librarians, although several mentioned modifications to accommodate their unique responsibilities. In some university-related schools, librarians may be awarded promotions strictly on the basis of criteria that apply only to librarians, through which one can eventually ascend, for example, from Librarian 1 to Librarian 2, etc. or from Assistant Librarian to Associate Librarian to Librarian.

The question of tenure for librarians offers a spectrum of institutional responses. At independent schools, librarians cited tenure or tenure-track positions as the most common contract arrangement; however, several other patterns exist as well. One librarian, who cannot be tenured as librarian, could receive tenure in



the part-time faculty position she fills, which raises the interesting possibility of being terminated as librarian, but continuing at the institution as a tenured faculty member. Another librarian reports that he is the only member of his faculty who is not eligible for tenure. Some librarians are officially classified as "administrative faculty," with renewable term appointments of a set number of years. Others are viewed primarily as administrators, usually with renewable term appointments, also. Librarians in university-related schools are generally ineligible for tenure *per se*, but usually have the possibility of continuing, or permanent, appointments, i.e., after a probationary period, they can be dismissed only for cause. Perhaps most unsettling for the authors, though not necessarily for the librarians affected, are the number of individuals who do not have a contract, but serve, for example, at the pleasure of a president or dean.

One institution offers the, apparently unique, option of a protected contract for the librarian. The conditions for eligibility, the procedures for application, and the reasons for denial of protected contract are the same as for classroom faculty who apply for tenure. The criteria for protected contract include the same criteria as for tenure, i.e., teaching, scholarship, service to the institution, the profession, the church, and the community, except that additional criteria, i.e., collection development, administration, personnel management, and financial management, which are unique to the librarian, are added and collectively weighted more heavily than teaching, etc. As is the case with tenured classroom faculty, a librarian with protected contract could be dismissed due to prolonged mental or physical illness, changes in the educational program, or financial exigency, although in the case of the librarian the institution must provide extraordinary compensation, i.e., the equivalent of two years' salary, unless the school demonstrates professional incompetence, neglect of professional duties, personal or professional misconduct, etc. The protected contract ensures the academic freedom of the librarian, yet also protects the school from the disastrous consequences of inadequate or incompetent administrative performance. The contract is sufficiently "protected," due to the potential financial penalty to the institution, so that the seminary is unlikely to initiate unpredictable or arbitrary dismissal actions. However, the "protection" is not so binding as to eliminate an institution's effective control over this critical administrative area. The protected contract acknowledges the faculty rank and status of the librarian, while also recognizing that the peculiar administrative and fiduciary obligations of the position require a modification of normal tenure procedures.

The survey asked librarians to estimate the percentage of time they spend in various tasks. The majority of librarians report spending 50 percent or more of their hours “managing the library,” including overall administration, financial planning, personnel concerns, etc. Approximately one-third “manage” for 20 percent to 40 percent of their time, while only a few declare spending less than 15 percent of their time thus occupied. Collection development, i.e., the intellectually creative process of implementing a plan for selecting new and retrospective publications, appears to be the second most time-consuming activity.

Many librarians also contribute significant hours to the institutional administrative work of their schools, for example, student advising, committee assignments, and similar tasks. Some are engaged in non-administrative library-related jobs, such as circulation, cataloging, and reference. A few of these librarians also serve as directors of research centers and chapel coordinators or engage in fundraising and public relations endeavors. They are least involved in classroom teaching and research for publication, although a number expressed regret at the situation.<sup>16</sup> Those involved in research cite publications in both academic theological disciplines and library science.

The small group of librarians who said that they “manage” for 15 percent or less of their time do so for a variety of reasons. One serves in a seminary-college library where the college librarian performs most administrative tasks, and she does mostly collection development. One librarian must spend nearly as much time in institutional administrative work and directing a historical center as library administration and collection development. Another balances almost equally collection development, teaching, research, and institutional commitments, resulting in much less time available for library administration.

Most of the librarians report being satisfied with their positions. Interestingly, in the independent schools, 10 librarians declared complete satisfaction with their situations. All of these individuals have faculty rank and status and, with one exception, all qualify for or have received tenure. The librarians at university divinity schools also expressed high levels of satisfaction.

Other librarians are not necessarily dissatisfied, but they raised issues that warrant attention. Some wished to revisit the tenure-for-administrators debate, and others disclosed lack of direct access to administrative decision making as problematic. The greatest number of responses in this category, however, described as troubling the institutional ambiguity or lack of clarity about the librarian’s position, in particular, the relation of the librarian to classroom faculty.

In conclusion, several recommendations regarding promotion, evaluation, tenure, and faculty status for librarians are in order. The recommendations assume that greater standardization of policies about librarians is desirable. Clearly, ATS institutions share little procedural uniformity regarding librarians. Deans and presidents involved in deliberations about the librarian will find no universal patterns or practices if they consult with their counterparts at other institutions. Lacking precedents, institutions often develop ad hoc solutions to personnel issues that would be better handled in concert. Unfortunately, the question of what do we do with the librarian often is asked in the midst of an evaluation rather than before it, sending the wrong message to the librarian.

Because ATS standards for accreditation are currently under revision, the time seems ideal for ATS and the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) to collaborate on standards, or at least generally accepted guidelines, for librarians.<sup>17</sup> Complete uniformity of practices is unrealistic, and perhaps not even desirable. However, establishing basic principles would benefit librarians and the institutions that employ them.

The issue of how librarians function at an institution, which was raised earlier in this article, could provide some guidance for formulating standards. Because librarians at ATS institutions function in different ways, standards or guidelines might follow several patterns or tracks. For example, some librarians serve primarily as administrators. They supervise and support people who directly deliver the curriculum, such as reference librarians and collection development librarians, but these activities are not their personal responsibility. They might have faculty status as a courtesy, but promotions would be made on the basis of administrative criteria and policies. Other librarians function primarily as faculty members. That is to say that they not only supervise and support others, but their primary responsibility is personally to deliver the curriculum. When librarians spend the majority of their time doing collection development, bibliographic instruction, teaching, and research for publication, it is not at all apparent that they should be viewed first and foremost as administrators. In other words, these librarians are teachers regardless of how much time they spend in the classroom. Such librarians should have faculty rank, privileges, and responsibilities on terms comparable with other faculty. Some attention to titles may be a useful way to clarify the librarian's function and position in the institution. Adding a subject area, when appropriate, to the librarian's title may help to clarify the relationship between the librarian and classroom faculty.

Many librarians transcend faculty / administrator categories. They thrive in dual roles, and their institutions provide attractive and carefully considered procedures for evaluation, promotion, compensation, and participation in decision making at a high level. Unfortunately, however, many other librarians experience the worst aspects of the faculty / administrator combination. In other words, they may be treated as administrators regarding terms of contract, e.g., no tenure or sabbaticals, but paid at faculty levels, which are generally lower than senior administrative salaries. Because they are faculty *and* administrators, they may lack an obvious advocacy body on the campus. An administrative council or a committee of the board supports senior administrators; a faculty council serves a similar function for classroom faculty. Which body intercedes for the librarian? Any hybrid contractual arrangement for the librarian needs to have safeguards built into it.

Access to tenure remains an ongoing concern for some librarians, many of whom already have the other privileges of faculty rank and status. We want neither to overemphasize nor to understate the importance of tenure. However, we believe arguments for access to tenure for classroom faculty readily apply to many librarians who have faculty rank and status. Schools that offer tenure to classroom faculty, but not to librarians, must ask whether their reasons are relevant and nondiscriminatory. For example, the argument that tenure does not provide adequate flexibility in the face of a rapidly changing world can be applied to classroom faculty and to librarians equally. Furthermore, the suggestion that tenure is no longer necessary given other protections in the work place can also be applied to both. Finally, to say that “we do not tenure administrators” may beg the question in light of the previous discussion of function.

In spite of the ambiguities experienced by librarians, job satisfaction remains generally high. Greater clarity about employment practices, particularly promotion, evaluation, tenure, and status, would further enhance librarians’ sense of fulfillment. For some librarians and other theological educators, sustained attention to these matters may seem archaic at a time when theological education is clamoring for creative innovation. Yet this consideration is precisely the kind of innovation needed by librarians. Otherwise, the old questions and issues will continue to distract librarians from the considerable challenges and opportunities now confronting theological libraries.

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## ENDNOTES

1. See the following articles by Stephen L. Peterson: "Theological Libraries for the Twenty-First Century: Project 2000 Final Report," *Theological Education* 20, Supplement (1984); "Project 2000 Revisited," (July, 1987); and "The More Things Change—The More Things Change: Theological Libraries in the 1990s," *Theological Education* 26 (1990): 137-151. See also "Report of ATS/ATLA Joint Committee on Library Resources," by Claude Welch in *ATS Bulletin* 39, Part 6 (1990): 124-127. Although these articles deal with library personnel to a certain extent, the focus is more broadly theological libraries.

2. In order to distinguish those librarians who exercise primary administrative oversight in the library from other professional librarians and support staff, we will hereafter refer to the former as the librarian.

3. The minimal literature on faculty status for theological librarians includes: John D. Batsel, "Faculty Status of Academic Librarians," *American Theological Library Association: Summary of Proceedings* 26 (1972): 151-156; Barbara Marjorie Griffis, "A Proposed Role for ATLA: A Study of Faculty Status for Theological Librarians," *American Theological Library Association: Summary of Proceedings* 27 (1973): 84-86; James C. Pakala, "Faculty Status and Theological Librarians," a report presented to the Committee on Standards of Accreditation of the American Theological Library Association (1980); and Ann L. Kemper, "Faculty Status of Theological Librarians in the American Theological Library Association," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, 2 (1994): 1-16.

The following two bibliographic articles represent the large amount of literature about faculty status for college and university librarians: Kee DeBoer and Wendy Culotta, "The Academic Librarian and Faculty Status in the 1980s: A Survey of the Literature," *College & Research Libraries* 48 (1987): 215-223 and Janet Krompart, "Researching Faculty Status: A Selective Annotated Bibliography," *College & Research Libraries* 53 (1992): 439-449. See also Charles B. Lowry, "The Status of Faculty Status for Academic Librarians: A Twenty-Year Perspective," *College & Research Libraries* 54 (1993): 163-172.

4. See *ATS Bulletin* 41, Part 3 (1994): 24-25 and Part 5 (1994): 1-8, 9-13, 31-33.

5. *ATS Bulletin* 41, Part 3 (1994): 29.

6. See *AAUP Policy Documents & Report* (Washington, DC: AAUP, 1990), 134-135.

7. *Ibid.*

8. "Standards for Faculty Status for College and University Librarians," *College and Research Libraries News* 53 (1992): 317.

9. *Ibid.*, 317-318.

10. For this study, we queried neither Roman Catholic nor Canadian librarians. We also circulated the questionnaire only to those serving as the head of a library.

11. Variations on the designation "librarian," include seminary librarian, director of the library, director of library and information services, library director, director of library services, director of the divinity library, and director, divinity school library.

12. In independent schools, twice as many librarians have joint titles as opposed to titles that are only function-related [16:8]. While in university-based schools, half have joint titles and half simply function-related titles [4:4].

13. Other degrees included B.D., M.R.E., M.Th., M.T.S., S.T.M., M.A., and M. Phil.

14. Of the librarians who have only masters' degrees, four have faculty rank and status, eight have faculty status only, and one has neither.

15. In the independent schools, most of the librarians have multiple masters' degrees, including a library science degree [12], followed numerically by those who have a doctorate and multiple masters' degrees, including a library science degree [7], those who have a doctorate and multiple masters' degrees, but no library science degree [2], those who have a doctorate and a library science degree [2], and one who has only a library science degree.

In the university-related schools, the librarians are almost equally divided among (1) those who have a doctorate and multiple masters' degrees, including a library science degree [3], (2) those who have multiple masters' degrees, including a library science degree [2], and (3) those who have a doctorate and multiple masters' degrees, but no library science degree [3]. Proportionally, fewer of these librarians have a degree in library science, than in the independent schools.

16. Nine reported teaching in the classroom on a regular basis for 10-25 percent of their time; however, most responded that they teach in the classroom only five percent or less of their time [10] or never [9]. Six report devoting 10-15 percent of their time to research, but most indicate five percent or less [13] or none [9]. (These numbers do not include librarians who manage for less than 15 percent of their time, and one person did not respond to this question.)

17. Standards would represent more formalized principles than guidelines. A draft document entitled "ATLA Guidelines on Terms of Employment for Theological Librarians," covering all types of theological librarians was published in the *ATLA Newsletter* 42 (1995): 59-61 and is currently under discussion by the ATLA Board of Directors.

# Riding the Whirlwind: The Community of Scholars as a Response to the Changing Face of Theological Education

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If anything universally true can be said of theological education at the end of the 20th century, it is that it is in a rapid process of transformation. Changing notions of the nature of scholarship and theological education, new internal and external demands on theological institutions themselves, and realistic responses to increasing burdens on limited monetary and personnel resources all contribute to this transformation. In this article, I will explore some of these issues in an effort to assess the situation and offer some suggestions that might respond to these needs by developing an integrated, yet diverse, community of scholars who can make a significant contribution to the churches of the 21st century. My remarks arise from within the context of a freestanding seminary of the Roman Catholic tradition, but they should be applicable to the diverse types of theological education presently available in North America. Further, while every aspect of the theological institution, especially its student population, must be understood as constitutive of a community of scholars, my remarks focus primarily on faculty scholarship development as the heart of any such reconception of institutional identity.

The first part of this article focuses on four major issues or challenges facing contemporary theological education: the changing definition of scholarship, the changing face of theological education itself, the demands external publics place on theologates, and the challenges to institutional resources these changes and demands make. The second part offers some suggestions for responsible faculty scholarship development which respond to these issues by developing an integrated community of scholars committed to the goals and needs of the institution as it attempts to respond to the legitimate demands placed upon it by the publics it serves.

## Contemporary Challenges

### *The Nature of Scholarship*

While increasing emphasis is placed on teaching ability, scholarship continues to be defined primarily by a guild approach. Thus, faculty competence is most often measured by the contribution the individual faculty member makes to one's peers through publication and scholarly papers. Significant challenges to this view have occurred in recent years, however. In particular, Ernest L. Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*<sup>1</sup> has made a significant contribution to broadening the notion of scholarship and providing suggestions for assessing and rewarding it.

Boyer suggests that there are four overlapping functions or terrains of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. The scholarship of discovery entails the traditional notion of scholarship. Scholars engaged in this type of scholarship attempt to advance their field of inquiry by pursuing knowledge in a disciplined manner wherever their investigations may lead. The scholarship of integration enables scholars to make connections across disciplines. Rather than asking, "What is to be known?" the integrators ask, "What do the findings mean?" Those engaged in the scholarship of application attempt to direct their expertise toward social and, we might add, ecclesial ends. They are engaged in a constant dialectic between the application of discovered or integrated knowledge to the benefit of society and the utilization of social problems to guide and direct the work of discovery and integration. Finally, the scholarship of teaching demands the transformation of knowledge by teachers who not only transmit information but instill a love for scholarship itself.

This broadening of the notion of scholarship demands new methods of assessment and reward. While some standards are particular to the type of scholarship in which the individual is engaged and the institution demands, Boyer articulates four standards that are applicable to all. First, faculty need to demonstrate their research ability, at least through the dissertation. Second, faculty must remain informed about their fields of expertise. Third, faculty must adhere to the highest standards of integrity, including ones that insure serious class preparation and availability to students and colleagues for advice. Finally, all scholarship needs to be evaluated. Such evaluation should include elements of self, peer, and student evaluation.

This transformation of the notion of scholarship and its assessment places changing demands upon the institution and the individual scholar. In particular, individual faculty members must increasingly interact with one another, and the



institution as a whole must engage in collaboration with other institutions with similar goals. Thus, this transformation necessitates the development of a community of scholars within the individual institution that is responsive not only to institutional and guild needs but also to society as a whole.

### *The Changing Face of Theological Education*

The new demands placed upon theological educators by changing conceptions of the nature of scholarship are complicated by further theoretical and experiential transformations occurring in theological education itself. Edward Farley's call for a recovery of the notion of theology as a *habitus*,<sup>2</sup> David Kelsey's articulation of the dialectic between an Athenian or *paidea* model of theological education and a Berlin model of movement from data to theory to application,<sup>3</sup> and discussions of globalization<sup>4</sup> have all raised serious questions about the nature of theological education and offered approaches to its reform. Most importantly, the dialectic between unity and pluralism which they raise presents a serious problem for the development of a community of scholars, especially in a denominational entity. How does a particular theological institution manifest the necessary plurality of theological questioning while maintaining a unity that serves both the discipline of theology itself and the churches for which theologates prepare ministers?

In addition to these theoretical considerations, theologates find themselves faced with a number of experiential challenges to traditional forms of theological education. Most importantly, the type of student entering the theologate has radically changed in the past 20 years. Gender and ethnic diversity as well as an increasing number of older and second-career students have brought new demands which theological institutions must address. Student populations have more diverse needs than ever before. Faculty members are increasingly called upon to practice techniques of adult learning, address educational deficiencies, and engage in a multicultural dialogue. These demands call for greater interaction and cooperation among faculty members and highlight the need for the institution to conceive of itself as a community of scholars.

Further, theological institutions are becoming increasingly aware of the need to integrate a formational aspect into their programs of ministerial preparation. While this has been a traditional aspect of Roman Catholic theological education, it has become a rising concern for other theological institutions as well. Future ministers must not only be intellectually prepared for the demands of contemporary ministry, they must be spiritually prepared as well. As a consequence, seminary faculty, especially in denominational institutions, find themselves not

only engaging in all of the usual practices of scholarly activity but also in such activities as ministerial mentoring and spiritual direction. If the formational aspects of the program are placed in the hands of the academic faculty, meeting these needs places extraordinary psychic demands on a faculty that is often already stretched. On the other hand, if formation is placed in the hands of a separate faculty, administrators find themselves faced with the dilemma of integrating both formational and academic faculty into a coherent whole. In either case, understanding the theologate as a community of scholars will begin to address the issue. Whether formation is done by the same or a separate faculty, formation itself must be understood as a scholarly activity, demanding expertise in preparation and execution as well as providing an, as yet, largely untapped field of research.

### *External Demands on Theologates*

Theological schools do not exist in vacuums. In addition to their internal institutional responsibilities, they have particular responsibilities to three major groups. First, they have obligations to the churches which sponsor them. Within the Roman Catholic tradition these obligations have been further specified in recent years by the promulgation of two important documents for seminary formation, the apostolic exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*<sup>5</sup> and the fourth edition of *The Program for Priestly Formation*.<sup>6</sup> In addition to providing norms for seminary education, these documents raise five important issues that call for the development of the seminary faculty as a community of scholars: the relationship between statements issued by the magisterium and theological discussion, the relationship between high scientific standards in theology and its pastoral aim, the evangelization of cultures and the inculturation of faith, a collaborative vision of priestly ministry, and the continuing education of priests.

In addition to official documents, current trends in church life call theologates to address questions that are best explored in a collegial manner. Given the current societal and ecclesial trends towards a more conservative outlook, how does one develop a theology which both remains faithful to tradition and provides new insights for evangelization in a multicultural society? How does the theologate remedy an increasing lack of background in ecclesiastical culture among candidates entering the seminary? What contributions should the theologate make in educating non-ordained ministers within a church increasingly marked by a diminishment of suitable candidates for ordained ministry? These and similar questions call for a community of scholars who are experts not only in the traditional scholarship of discovery but also in the scholarship of integration, application, and teaching.

A second source of obligation for theologates exists in their relationship to society as a whole. Theologates must be centers of theological reflection on the many problems society faces today. New technologies, increasing marginalization of the poor, issues at the edges of life including abortion and euthanasia, and the relationship of the gospel to a society pluralistic in value and multicultural in context are but a few. Each of these issues demands a faculty that can cross disciplines and engage creatively in the scholarship of integration and application. Given an ever more pronounced societal thirst for spiritual values, theologates also need to become resources for spiritual development to the larger community. Theology faculties of the 21st century will need to be communities of deep experiential faith if they are to guide other Christians in the intricacies of the spiritual life.

Finally, theologates, especially freestanding seminaries, must enter more fully into dialogue with the Academy. Such dialogue demands rigorous critical thinking and writing, a willingness to overcome one's specialization in order to address other academic disciplines, and a nondefensive posture that remains faithful to the theological interests of one's ecclesial tradition while being willing to pursue the truth wherever it leads. Each of these elements calls for the development of an interdisciplinary scholarship of discovery best articulated by faculty members who see themselves both as members of a particular community of scholars and the larger community of scholars who constitute *academia*.

Within theological education itself specific areas of academic dialogue also exist. In addition to the issues of the changing face of theological education raised above, the relationship between theology as practiced in the freestanding professional ministerial school and theology as practiced in the university poses serious and complex questions that can only be addressed by greater interaction between faculties of such institutions. Such interaction calls for corporate commitments to developing communities of scholars who can bridge the differences in these approaches to theological education by examining such issues as the nature of university education, the mutual dialectic between intellectual and pastoral formation, and the validity of theological research carried out from a non-neutral perspective.

### ***Challenges to Institutional Resources***

Responding to the challenges posed by the transformation of the nature of scholarship, the changing face of theological education, and the theologate's relationship to external publics places incredible demands upon theological faculties. These demands are exacerbated by further challenges to institutional

resources. The decreasing numbers of suitable candidates for ordained ministries force institutions to consider decreasing faculty size. As a result, the already burdensome issue of faculty work load is becoming more problematic. Fiscal responsibility must also count the human cost entailed in providing excellence in theological education. In addition, decreasing faculty size reduces the traditional possibilities of scholarly collaboration within a department. Small, even single-person departments, call for more interdisciplinary interaction. While questions of regionalization of seminaries must be raised, the development of a team or community approach to theological education will also be a formidable resource for addressing these issues.

Further, faculty work load is not merely a matter of increasing demands and diminishing student and fiscal resources. Individual faculty differences must also be included in the equation. Theological administrators increasingly need to develop the faculty as a community of scholars wherein the particular talents of individuals are honored and maximized while limitations are minimized. They will also need to develop an appreciation of the role of corporate scholarship among particular faculty members so that individual faculty members do not feel unjustly burdened by the institutional demands placed upon them or jealous of other faculty members who have different demands placed upon them. Constant vigilance against real or perceived differences in individual faculty work loads as well as the development of a consistent awareness of the multidimensional contributions of various faculty members to the efforts of the faculty as a whole must become primary considerations in the development of administrative strategies for responsible use of faculty resources.

### **Responses: Building a Community of Scholars**

The challenges facing theologates of the 21st century all indicate the necessity of consciously reconceiving traditional approaches to faculty scholarship and understanding the faculty as the heart of a community of scholars. What follows are suggested components of a program of faculty scholarship development that will enable theological faculties and administrations to move toward such redefinition in a responsible manner.

#### ***Defining a Community of Scholars***

The development of a community of scholars begins with ownership of the concept existentially by both faculty and administration. Such ownership cannot be imposed but must arise from an interactive process within which both faculty

and administration cooperate to come to a common understanding of their identity as leaders in theological education, the types of scholarship to be emphasized by the institution, and the responsibilities they have to their appropriate publics. The process itself will define the community of scholars precisely by beginning to build the heart of such a community.

This process begins with a self study in which the faculty and administration examine together the contemporary literature concerning theological education and identify their appropriate place within it. Is their theologate primarily a research institution, engaged in the scholarship of discovery, or is it an institution of integration or application? How do the faculty and administration understand themselves as contributors to the overall mission of the institution and the larger enterprise of scholarship itself?

Secondly, what responsibilities do they have to their various publics? How well do they respond to the changing needs of students, engage in appropriate conversation with society and the academy? As institutions that serve either individual churches or a variety of denominations, what are their responsibilities and current interactions with those entities? What might be done by the faculty both as individuals and as a whole to minimize limitations and maximize their responses to their various publics?

Thirdly, both faculty and administration need to examine their current level of activity and its effectiveness. Such an assessment should include at least written questionnaires for full-time faculty and administrators, adjunct faculty, and an appropriate portion of the present student body and alumni. Interviews with an outside consultant for full-time faculty and administrators are also appropriate. All need to be cognizant of their various responsibilities, percentages of time allotted to fulfill those responsibilities, influences that motivate or hinder scholarly work, how scholarly work is institutionally assisted or hindered, and to what extent current scholarship involves collaboration with colleagues. The student questionnaire should include such items as awareness of the scholarly interests, research, and publication activity of faculty members; the impact of such factors on the quality of teaching; faculty knowledge and objectivity about current theological opinion; how effectively the institution prepares its candidates for multicultural ministry, collaboration with others, a sense of ministry, and the like.

The process concludes with faculty and administration establishing and confirming an institutional scholarly identity to which each member sees himself or herself making a significant, appropriate contribution. It should also include goals and strategies for faculty scholarship development on both the individual and corporate level for at least a three-year period.

### *Developing Corporate Scholarship*

While strategies and methods for developing corporate identity as a community of scholars will vary from institution to institution, I would like to suggest a dozen points of departure for such development: enhancing the environment, teaching to teach, promoting interdisciplinary scholarship via the colloquium, developing awareness and keeping informed of scholarly issues, mentoring, teaching across the curriculum, interacting with other scholars and institutions, applying scholarship to ecclesial and societal needs, planning for individual scholarship, recognizing and rewarding faculty achievement, and recruiting and retaining faculty. Taken together, these starting points should assist in developing an integrated community of scholars while enhancing faculty morale, promoting individual and group initiative, and insuring accountability in a non-threatening manner. A few comments on each are in order.

***Enhancing the Environment.*** The background within which one works is a much neglected factor in scholarship development. Further, when institutions are renovated, the classroom is often the last area to be considered. Yet it is here that the institution will either develop its identity as a community of scholars or fight against it. Lecture halls filled with uniform rows of uncomfortable chairs equipped with a writing space suitable for a steno pad promote a view of learning wherein an individual lecturer communicates information to a group of passive auditors. Classrooms equipped with moveable furniture, acoustics suitable for both lecture and discussion, and ample electrical outlets and equipment for computer and audiovisual use promote active learning wherein experts and neophytes learn together. One environment enforces a static hierarchical view of education; the other enhances the dynamic possibilities of community.

This dialectic between hierarchy and community is also illustrated in the area of office space. A comparison of the furnishings, size, and locations of administrative offices with faculty offices can say a great deal about an institution's identity. The nature of the relative tasks needs to be taken into account, but faculty offices need to be sufficiently large for the professor to do individual work and meet with small groups of students and colleagues. Office furniture needs to create an atmosphere conducive to scholarly work on both the individual and group level. Appropriately furnished space for ministerial mentoring and spiritual direction must be found as well. In the information age, faculty work spaces need to be equipped with dedicated telephone lines for computer use and a sufficient number of electrical outlets. Adequate secretarial assistance for faculty will also free them for more time to interact with one another.

Computerization is a third environmental element in building a community of scholars. The library, classrooms, and office spaces need to be equipped for computer and internet usage. Institutions will also enhance communication and promote scholarly interaction by establishing computer networks and providing accounts for accessing the internet. A faculty computer center equipped with computers, scanners, and color printers will not only be of great technical assistance for research and class preparation, but also a place for informal communication among colleagues.

Computerization also demands training. Video tapes, seminars on various aspects of computer use (such as desktop publishing and establishing research databases), and either a formal or informal computer consultant will enable the faculty and administration to begin to use this technology to its full advantage.

The importance of the library is another environmental element in building a community of scholars which cannot be underestimated. Computerized catalogue access, periodical data bases, research assistance, and an adequate collection are *sine qua non* for a community of scholars. One cannot work without tools.

**Teaching to teach.** Theological faculties are normally more than competent in their specialties. They are seldom prepared adequately in the process of teaching itself. Faculty retreats that experientially introduce the faculty to adult learning models and methodologies contribute to addressing the issue of the changing needs of students. Further, because the best way to learn group learning is to become part of a group oneself, the faculty identity as a community of scholars is reinforced. Focusing on the methodology of teaching also enables the faculty to see the interrelationships of the curriculum. Finding out who teaches what, when, and where it gets repeated and developed enables the faculty to understand the curriculum as a communal, interdependent process. Faculty androgogical retreats are supported and supplemented when the academic dean regularly distributes appropriate materials on teaching methodologies.<sup>7</sup> Finally, given the importance of student evaluation of courses for faculty evaluation and advancement, teaching the faculty to teach is a simple exercise of justice.

**The colloquium.** Colloquiums are traditional forms of scholarly interaction. Too often, however, they remain isolated to a particular discipline. Choosing a topic that can be explored across the disciplines through an academic year is one way of overcoming this isolation. Having faculty members from different disciplines address a common issue of concern within a single colloquium is another. For example, having scholars of Scripture respond to contemporary epistemologi-

cal concerns raised by hermeneutics as articulated by a philosopher is a sure fire discussion starter. Having colloquiums at times convenient to adjunct faculty enables the full-time faculty to interact with colleagues they seldom see and enhances the adjunct faculty's identification with the institution.

*Developing awareness and keeping informed of scholarly issues.* Meeting to study and discuss a commonly agreed upon text is another simple way of building scholarly community. Not only does it keep the faculty focused on issues of common concern, it enables them to react with other scholars via discussion and the written word. Groups of faculty members from different disciplines may also join in a common writing project around a single topic. Not only does such activity promote publication, the hard work of agreeing upon a common final text has great potential for understanding scholarship as a communal activity. It also has great risks!

Having faculty members write a short report on attendance at scholarly meetings is an opportunity for sharing that information with other faculty members if published in a faculty newsletter. It also provides more accountability for the use of scholarly development money for such purposes.

*Mentoring.* Peer mentoring is common means of building a community of scholars. While inviting another faculty member to observe one's teaching can be a good source of evaluative feedback for advancement, it need not be so. A voluntary program of cross-observation without evaluation has the potential to improve both teachers' teaching and observation skills. Asking another teacher to recount one's movement in the classroom, directing of questions, use of the blackboard, or some other specific area of observation provides a mirror for improving teaching methods. Videotaping followed by a "Monday game review" enhances this process. A simple checklist of topics checked and signed by the participants without asking for the content of the discussion is a sufficient means of insuring accountability in this area. Improvement of student evaluation forms for courses by the quantitative inclusion of more specific androgogical items is another, but it means reconceiving what is sought on such forms.

*Interdisciplinary teaching* is a means of building a community of scholars which is often resisted by both faculty and administration alike. Faculty resist because working with another is labor intensive. It takes *more* work to design and execute a course with another, not less. Administrators resist because of the cost factor, either directly by citing the expense of team teaching or indirectly by suggesting that such courses constitute less than a full course when determining course load. Refocusing the curriculum might be one way of beginning to address the issue. Interdisciplinary courses can be introduced into the core as well as the



elective curriculum. Combining the theological anthropology course with the introductory course on personal and social ethics, and teaching it as a single four- or five-hour course rather than as two three-hour courses, allows for cross-fertilization and integration without becoming overly burdensome either in terms of labor or cost.

*Visiting scholars and faculty exchanges* are means of enabling a faculty to see itself as part of a larger community of scholars. Having a visiting scholar join a full-time faculty member to conduct a seminar on a common topic of scholarly research provides fertile ground for both researchers. It also enables students to see classical scholarly interaction at its best. The challenge of listening to two experts discuss a field of common interest or struggle with the interpretation of a particularly difficult work is at once humbling and mind expanding.

Faculty exchanges are a cost-efficient means of sharing resources while providing opportunities for building the larger community of scholars. Such exchanges between theological institutions with common interests not only enables each institution to share the specialized expertise of individual scholars, but also enables those scholars to interact with a different faculty, especially others within their own disciplines. This can be done on a course level if the institutions are in geographical proximity, or a semester or academic year if not. The administrative complications that arise from such exchanges are more than balanced by the possibilities of providing a broader curriculum taught by experts in a particular subspecialization and of strengthening bonds with the other institution. Individual faculty members involved in such exchanges will find their expertise honored.

*Addressing the needs of the church and the community.* Theological schools are often untapped resources for the area around them. Presenting the results of years of scholarly research to a popular audience can be an exciting source of challenge to either individual scholars or teams of scholars. Establishing centers of continuing education at the theologate is another means of becoming an ecclesial and communal resource while addressing the issue of underutilized facilities. Seminary faculties also need to offer themselves as theological resources for ecclesiastical authorities. Such activities promote the scholarship of integration and application, enhance the visibility of the theologate, and respond to genuine needs. Care needs to be taken here, however, to insure that faculty participation in such efforts are seen as part of their contractual obligations rather than being an extra effort added to an already burdensome workload.

*Planning for individual scholarship.* Corporate scholarship must also consider individual scholarly needs and their relationship to the community of

scholars as a whole. Using Boyer's creativity contracts<sup>8</sup> to help faculty members establish three- to five-year personal scholarly goals in relationship to the goals and purposes of the institution is one means of insuring that the dialectical relationship between personal and corporate scholarship is honored. Such contracts take the shifting goals of individuals and institutions seriously. They also broaden the criteria for articulating faculty expectations and individualize them in light of the needs of the institution as a whole. This individualization promotes an understanding of the theologate as a community of scholars by respecting its diversity.

*Recognizing and rewarding scholarship.* Communities reinforce their identity through rituals that honor individuals and call attention to the values commonly held by the community. Book-signing receptions, awards for teaching excellence, publishing lists of recent faculty publications and awards in a faculty newsletter, establishing institutional mini-grants to assist faculty scholarship, and the like are all ways of embodying this value. Further, sabbaticals and assistance for faculty in conceiving and writing grants for individual and small team research projects need to be provided.

*Recruiting and retaining faculty.* Careful attention needs to be paid to the recruitment of new faculty if the institution is to maintain its identity as a community of scholars. Consideration of how a potential faculty member will relate to the faculty as a team needs to become a major consideration in hiring. Further, multicultural and gender diversity must become a priority if a dynamic sense of community is to be maintained.

New faculty must be integrated into the community of scholars. Mentoring by senior faculty members will enable new faculty to learn the implicit rules and values of the institution, provide a hospitable welcome, and hasten the process of integration. Mini-sabbaticals for the purposes of publication after the second year of service will also give new faculty, especially those with recent doctorates, an increased opportunity to establish themselves within the larger community of scholars.

Retaining faculty provides institutional stability. Not only must faculty be compensated adequately, they must know that they are honored, respected, and revered. Providing a proper environment, planning for individual scholarship, and recognizing and rewarding scholarship are all means of establishing community identification and loyalty.

## Conclusion

The challenges facing theologates as they plan for the 21st century call for those institutions to understand themselves as a dynamic community of scholars. Broadening notions of scholarship, changing conceptions of theological education, pluralism, increasing multiculturalism and globalization, a more diverse student population, and responsible use of institutional resources are all factors that necessitate a transformation of faculty identity from guild identity to interdisciplinary identity. Interdisciplinary identity finds its unity in communal identification with the goals and purposes of a particular institution which is oriented beyond itself. Thus, theologates need to identify themselves as dynamic communities of scholars within which individuals can exercise their talents in a manner that promotes individual satisfaction while understanding that such satisfaction arises only in relationship to others and fulfills the changing needs of the institution as well as scholarship itself.

Building such communities of scholars demands a multifaceted process that is owned and executed by both faculty and administrators. While I have suggested a number of strategies that can constitute such a process, perhaps the greatest factor in developing a community of scholars is flexibility. Only by being attentive to changing individual and institutional needs, cognizant of ecclesial and societal trends, and aware of itself as a dynamic community of scholars will theologates continue to prepare scholars and ministers of the gospel in a manner that is faithful to that gospel.

Change is the sign of life, and contemporary experience is marked by ever increasing rates of change. Understanding themselves as communities of scholars provides a dynamic stability of common vision and effort that will enable theologates to embrace such change—riding, but not being swept up in, its whirlwind.

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ENDNOTES

1. Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Princeton: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1990).
2. See Edward Farley, *The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and University* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988) as well as *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).
3. See David H. Kelsey, *Between Athens and Berlin: The Theological Education Debate* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993) and *To Understand God Truly: What's Theological About a Theological School* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992).
4. A number of recent issues of *Theological Education* have made significant contributions to an examination of this phenomenon. See also Joseph C. Hough, Jr. and John B. Cobb, Jr., *Christian Identity and Theological Education* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1985) and Max L. Stackhouse, *Apologia: Contextualization, Globalization and Mission in Theological Education* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985).
5. John Paul II, "Pastores Dabo Vobis," Apostolic Exhortation following the International Synod of Bishops in 1990, in *Norms for Priestly Formation*, Volume II (Washington, DC: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1993), 263-351.
6. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Program for Priestly Formation*, Fourth Edition (Washington, DC: The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1992).
7. One good source for such material is the IDEA papers published regularly by the Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development, Division of Continuing Education, Kansas State University.
8. Boyer, 43-51.